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THE FORGOTTEN McCARTNEY

by Noreen Taylor
PAGE 12

BEST FOR BOOKS

Stripping in Time
by Lucinda Jarrett
PLUS: Roger Scruton
on *After God*
PAGES 32, 33

952 FOR 6: 1938 TEST RECORD FALLS AT LAST

PAGE 37

BEST FOR JOBS

☐ Director... 100K
☐ Manager... 50K
☐ Analyst... 35K
☐ Graduate... 30K
18 PAGES OF APPOINTMENTS

Local offices would get own budgets

Eurore over Field's plans for welfare

BY ANDREW PIERCE
POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT
AND VALERIE ELLIOT

THE Government was accused yesterday of taking the first step towards regional variations in welfare payments after a senior minister floated plans to give local benefit offices control of their own budgets.

Frank Field, the Social Security Minister who was brought into the Government with a specific task of overhauling the £2 billion a week welfare bill, said that by devolving power from the Social Security Department to the 500 local offices savings from the benefits bill could be paid in schools and hospitals.

Mr Field, one of the Government's most radical thinkers, said that local offices had to be given autonomy over their budgets. "If it doesn't happen, I don't see how we are going to be able to deliver the sorts of reforms that we want to deliver. It's clearly got to be on the agenda. Quite how we do it is the next stage," he said.

His remarks, made during a visit to a benefit office in Exeter, were seized on by civil service trade union officials, left-wing Labour MPs and the Opposition as a step towards the abolition of the system of universal benefit payments.

The interview caused confusion at the department, which tried to play down his remarks: four hours later, he had to issue a statement denying that he was actually proposing regional benefit differentials.

Paul Flynn, Labour MP for



Field: Remarks played down by officials

Newport West, said the fiasco left question marks against the Government's intentions. "Frank Field was appointed to the Government to think the unthinkable. Now he is saying the unsayable. I think he must be on Planet Zog."

"When the Government announced its devolution proposals for Wales and Scotland, the social security element was left as a United Kingdom provision. No one believes it can work any other way because of the uniformity of regional variations." A second left-winger, Jeremy Corbyn, MP for Islington North, described the comments as bizarre.

Jim Hanson, national officer of the Civil and Public Service Union, whose members man benefit offices, was dismayed by the comments. He said that many of his members were already subjected to abuse and violence from claimants.

"At the moment, at least we can say that these [benefit]

levels are not determined by the staff, they are determined by Parliament. But if they are determined by the staff in the offices, then we are going to find people wanting to take it out on them if they are not satisfied," he said.

As the political row deepened, the department sought to play down the significance of Mr Field's remarks. Senior officials maintained that Mr Field was not referring to autonomy over benefit levels but over other matters such as saving fraud and office costs, which count for barely more than 1 per cent of the department's £96 billion budget.

Mr Field's statement denied that he was proposing the abolition of universal benefits. He said that he had been responding to Exeter benefit office staff who had asked him to look at ways to move funds from welfare to work opportunities. "That does not mean different amounts of benefit in different areas of the country."

Mr Field frequently ran into trouble as an opposition back-bencher with a series of radical proposals for the management of local benefit offices. In 1990, he suggested allowing private insurance companies and friendly societies to compete every four years to run government regional social security offices. The idea was then to give the unemployed a "cashpoint card" for them to withdraw their benefits from a hole in the wall. His idea was taken up by the Adam Smith Institute. Yesterday the think tank, which was much favoured by Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, said any plans to

Continued on page 2, col 1



A pedestrian is soaked by a passing car in Swansea yesterday. Traffic suffered severe disruption and in Somerset a road was washed away

Storms force thousands to end holidays

BY RORY CARROLL

TORRENTIAL rain across England and Wales caused disruption to traffic and rail services yesterday and persuaded thousands of families to abandon their summer holidays.

Streams of cars and caravans left West Country resorts and headed home as driving rain continued for a third day, wiping out sporting fixtures and festivals.

In some places three inches of rain — more than the average for the whole of August — fell in just 24 hours.

The annual two-day flower show in Taunton, Somerset, which last year attracted 26,000 people, was cancelled for the first time since the First World

War. A spokesman said ducks were swimming on a lake in the main arena.

Another horticultural show in Landkey, North Devon, was cancelled for the first time in its 31-year history.

In Bristol, the rain grounded 30 hot air balloons due to float over the city in the traditional curtain-raiser for the city's balloon festival.

The Meteorological Office warned that more thunderstorms were on the way. The South West and low-lying areas were put on flood alert.

Experts blamed low pressure off the south-west coast for the downpours which are coming from Europe.

Philip Eden of the PA Weather Centre said: "The whole of England, Wales and Northern Ireland could see

an inch of rain fall in an hour and in a few places there could be as much as two inches in an hour. If it happens over a town it will produce an awful lot of flooding."

Floods swept away large sections of the A39 near Cannington in Somerset, a holiday route. Highway officials said it was the first time they had known rain destroy a modern road.

Two lanes of the M25 were blocked during rush hour when a rainsodden chalk embankment collapsed at Junction 8 near Reigate in Surrey. Flooded slip roads added to the chaos.

Firemen in Wales were called to flooded homes and businesses in Pembrokeshire, while in Gloucestershire basements were swamped.

An AA spokesman said: "Conditions have been getting more and more atrocious for three days and a lot of holidaymakers have turned tail because of the weather."

A farmer aged 67 found dead in a flooded field in Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare, yesterday was believed to have drowned in the floods sweeping the Irish Republic.

A group of about 30 teenagers fleeing floods in Wrocław and Opole in southern Poland, have been staying in Swansea. "We thought we had seen the last of the horrible weather. Now we feel like it has followed us," said Marta Marcinska, a student.

Forecast, page 20

Shares break 5,000 barrier

The stock market soared over 5,000 to close at 5026.2, up 85.6. Dealers said the rise was caused by a strong set of results from some of Britain's largest companies and by a marked fall in the pound during the day. Sterling's trade-weighted index fell steeply, losing 1.8 points to close at 103.9. Page 21

CJD warning

A leading British expert on Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, Dr John Collinge, has warned of complacency over the chances of a major epidemic. Page 2
Dr. Stottford, page 13

TV & RADIO

WEATHER... 20
CROSSWORDS... 20, 40
LETTERS... 15
OBITUARIES... 11
W. REES-MOGG... 14
ARTS... 29-31
CHESS & BRIDGE... 36
COURT & SOCIAL... 40
SPORT... 34-38, 46
BODY & MIND... 13
LAW REPORT... 26

Boy of five shot dead in 'contract killing' blunder

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A BOY aged five was shot dead last night by a gunman wearing a motor-cycle crash helmet, apparently in a contract killing that went wrong. The boy was shot in the head and his father, believed to be the real target, was shot in the stomach as they walked from their car towards their home in Bolton.

The injured man, who was last night undergoing surgery at Bolton General Infirmary, was said by neighbours to be John Bates. The boy is understood to have been his son Dylan.

Mary Cooper, who saw the attack, said: "A man wearing a motorbike helmet jumped out of a yellow Mini Metro, shot at the man and boy, then ran off down an alley. When I looked round I saw a man in the middle of the street holding a little boy covered in blood. The man was crying hysterically, clinging to the little boy."

She ran across and put the boy in the recovery position. She said he was still clutching a toy and had been shot twice in the back of the head. "He was in a terrible state. I did not realise that the man had been shot. I thought all the blood was coming from the child. It was only a couple of minutes later that I realised the man had been shot in the stomach."

"There was blood everywhere. As soon as the ambulances arrived the paramedics took over."

Another witness said: "It was like something out of an American gangster movie. This man with the gun walked up to the two of them. He never hesitated. Then he ran off and took off his crash helmet as he went."

"The shot man was holding his son in his arms as he lay on the pavement. There was a lot of blood."

Dawn Blake of Greater

Manchester Ambulance Service said: "We received a call at ten past five telling us there had been a shooting in Bolton. When our crew arrived they discovered that a five-year-old had died as a result of a bullet wound to the head. We also had a male adult who had suffered a bullet wound to the abdomen. They were both taken to hospital."

"We don't have absolute confirmation of the man's condition but certainly a bullet wound to the stomach cannot be considered a minor injury."

The killer's car was left abandoned in the street where the shooting took place. Neighbours reported hearing the sound of another car driving away at high speed.

Greater Manchester police sealed off the area, a network of narrow small streets close to a main route west. Officers then began house to house inquiries.

Wife relives horror of jumbo crash ordeal

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

A WOMAN who had nine relatives on the Korean Air jet which crashed into a mountain in Guam on Wednesday has told how she lost her husband in Korea's last airline disaster.

Meena Park said her husband died with 268 others when a Korean Airlines flight was shot down after straying into Soviet airspace in 1983.

Mrs Park, waiting for official news in Glendale, California, with her sister Kelly Kang whose eight-year-old daughter Tiffany was on Flight 801 said: "What else?"

The sisters, who said their relatives were travelling to Guam for a five-day holiday, criticised the headline set up by Korean Air. "When I call the number, they say call back," said Mrs Park, who was a Korean Air flight attendant for 11 years. "Fourteen years ago they released the names after 12 hours. I would have hoped they could have improved."

Last night reports said that

226 people were killed when the jumbo crashed in jungle near the Pacific island's airport. There were 28 survivors. Rescuers worked through the night searching for survivors. But officials said the effort was being hampered by the rough terrain and by the bad weather.

Families protest, page 9



Park: husband died in 1983 air disaster

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Gourmets gluttons for school food

BY DAVID CHARTER
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

BOARDING school cuisine, long regarded as the lowest form of culinary life, may now match standards in some of the country's top restaurants.

Uppingham School in Rutland, where a place at table (plus education) costs £12,750 a year, challenged food critics to sample its fare. The results, published in *The Egon Ronay Guide* in its first ever assessment of school dinners, found the food far removed from the semolina-and-sledge image.

The inspectors are now planning a guide to boarding school cuisine.

In a six-page report, inspectors said that a variety of curries and a "pleasantly spicy well-seasoned" chilli con carne at the 400-year-old alma mater of Stephen Fry were on a par with meals at restaurants in the company's annual guide to the best tables.

Inspectors reported that the school's own dish *Chicken Uppingham-style* was an attractive "poached breast wrapped in streaky bacon surrounded by leek and tarra-

gon sauce". Special praise was reserved for the chicken curry cooked with fresh spices, and for "a good well-flavoured beef curry comprising small, tender chunks of meat in a rich, not-too-spicy sauce".

The assessors even called for second helpings of "excellent chocolate crispie cakes that were rich and sticky". They baulked at tinned tomatoes and toasted sandwiches made with processed cheese, only to be told that the pupils loved them.

Uppingham, whose 640 pu-

pils include the son of Stephen Dorrell, Shadow Education Secretary, has 13 boarding houses, 11 kitchens and 26 cooks.

Chris Lewis, managing director of *The Egon Ronay Guides*, said: "It was a first for us and something we would like to do more of. There could be an Egon Ronay guide soon."

One of the school's old boys, Rick Stein — owner of The Seafood Restaurant, Padstow — won the Egon Ronay Award in 1996.



"Oh no, not turbotin au gratin coulis d'écrevisses again"



CJD threat 'is underestimated'

Government scientist warns that complacency may lead to Europe-wide epidemic, reports Nigel Hawkes

A LEADING expert on Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease has warned of a growing sense of complacency over the chances of a major epidemic.

Dr John Collinge of St Mary's Hospital in London says that although the number of cases of the new form of the disease believed to be caused by infected beef has not risen as quickly as some people feared, a major epidemic could still occur.

"It may only involve hundreds, but it could be Europe-wide and become a disaster of biblical proportions," Dr Collinge said.

"We have to face the possibility of a disaster with tens of thousands of cases."

This prospect is not new, he said, but there is a danger that it is being

discounted too quickly. The chairman of the Government's advisory committee on CJD-like diseases, Professor John Pattison, warned 18 months ago of the possibility of half a million deaths.

Since then, the actual numbers have risen to only 21. "There seems to be a revisionist view gaining ground in the press not only that the link between bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or 'mad cow' disease, and new variant CJD is not clearly established, but that the epidemic is likely to be small," Dr Collinge said.

"In fact the link is very clearly established, and there are going to be a lot more cases. We are still in the dark about how many, but we have to

prepare for the worst." In the past week, one confirmed case of new variant CJD and one suspected case have emerged. Sue Carey, 36, a mother of four who was living in Lincolnshire at the time of her death in March, has been confirmed by the CJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh as a victim of the new variant.

Mandy Minto, 27, a former European Judo Champion from Grangemouth, Sunderland, died eight months after falling ill and is also suspected of being a victim of CJD. Confirmation awaits detailed examination of her brain tissue, the only certain way for diagnosing the disease.

Dr Collinge believes that a drug to

control the progress of the disease is possible and could be available within ten years. "I would like to see the pharmaceutical industry do more," he said.

"But I can understand why they are reluctant. The number of cases is still small, so it is hard for them to justify heavy spending. But if they wait until there are many cases, it will be too late."

He has no complaints about the support for his own research, most of which has come not from Government sources but from the Wellcome Trust. "I don't believe that throwing money at the problem would necessarily help, anyway," he said.

A Health Department spokeswoman

denied that there was any sense of complacency within the Government over CJD. Since SEAC reported on the possible link between 'mad cow' disease and the new variant form of CJD, a number of new research projects have begun after the department and the Medical Research Council called for proposals from researchers.

Dr Collinge himself eats beef, arguing that it would be illogical to avoid it now that the infected material has been removed. He has no children but admitted that if he had he would be reluctant to give them beef or beef products.

Dr Thomas Stuttaford, page 13



The Sinn Féin delegation arriving at Stormont Castle yesterday to meet the Northern Ireland Secretary, led by the MPs Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness

Mowlam meets republican leadership

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

MO MOWLAM, the Northern Ireland Secretary, held her first face-to-face meeting yesterday with a Sinn Féin delegation that included the MPs Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness and a convicted IRA gunman.

Dr Mowlam apologised if the meeting at Stormont Castle angered victims of the IRA, but insisted that bringing Sinn Féin into talks was the only way to prevent further violence and killings.

The gunrunner, Martin Ferris, served ten years in prison for attempting to smuggle seven tons of arms into Ireland. Dr Mowlam said imposing conditions on whom she met would merely mean months of further delay before peace talks could begin. The 2½-hour meeting, made possible by the new IRA ceasefire, was the first between British ministers and Sinn Féin since January 1996, one month before the collapse of the previous ceasefire.

Both sides emerged speaking cordially of the other. Dr Mowlam called Mr Adams a "strong, competent leader" and said she felt more confident about Sinn Féin's commitment to peace. Mr Adams acknowledged this "was not the same type of meetings we had with the last government" and welcomed Dr Mowlam as Northern Ireland's first woman Secretary of State. "We



Mowlam emphasised need for talks

also want her to be the last Secretary of State," he added. Mr Adams, the Sinn Féin president, used the meeting to emphasise that Sinn Féin's first demand in the multi-party talks scheduled to resume on September 15 would be an united Ireland. "An internal six-county arrangement cannot work. There has to be fundamental constitutional and political change. The status quo is unworkable," he told Dr Mowlam.

However, Mr Adams hinted that Sinn Féin might accept some transitional arrangement, telling reporters that "in the meantime" there had to be "as many improvements in the situation as possible". Those

included an end to discrimination and harassment; demilitarisation; and the release of all "political" prisoners.

The meeting made no discernible progress towards resolving the two main obstacles to Unionist participation in the negotiations. Mr Adams insisted that IRA disarmament could only take place in the context of Northern Ireland's "total demilitarisation", and refused to accept the principle of consent if it was limited to Northern Ireland and gave the Province's Unionist majority a veto.

For Sinn Féin, yesterday's meeting was of great symbolic importance. Mr Adams and his five colleagues fully exploited the opportunity, walking the last 100 yards to the gates for the benefit of the many television cameras and holding a lengthy press conference afterwards. However, Dr Mowlam and her political affairs minister, Paul Murphy, greeted Mr Adams behind closed doors.

Events elsewhere in Northern Ireland yesterday underscored the fragility of the present peace. A hoax bomb was sent to the loyalist Progressive Unionist Party. The Loyalist Volunteer Force, a paramilitary splinter group, attacked a Roman Catholic taxi driver in Craigavon.

Michael Gove, page 14



Dana: said that she wanted to give something back to the people of Ireland

Seventies singer Dana in bid for Irish presidency

BY AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

DANA, the 1970 Irish Eurovision Song Contest winner, yesterday declared that she would stand for election as Irish president.

The singer, whose real name is Rosemary Brown, said it would be an honour to serve the Irish people and she would willingly give up her career in entertainment to contest the October poll.

Dana, 44, who lives in Alabama, is staunchly anti-abortion and hosts a chat show on Mother Angelica, a US Catholic cable television channel. She told Irish radio: "This is not an ego trip. This is for financial gain or emotional

security. I really would love to be able to give back something to the people of Ireland for all they have given me."

Dana, who would need the support of 20 Irish MPs to secure a nomination, said it remained to be seen whether she would get the necessary backing. She decided to run after consulting her husband and four children, who were "very excited" by the move.

Dana, who was born in Londonderry and won the song contest with *All Kinds of Everything*, said she would reconsider her decision if John Hume, the SDLP leader, sought to succeed the incumbent, Mary Robinson. Mrs Robinson is standing down on September 12 to become the United Nations commissioner for human rights.

Mr Hume, also from Londonderry, has been asked by the main Irish political parties to stand for the position. He is the bookies' favourite for the job but said he had not decided whether he would accept the nomination. In a statement, he said that he was too preoccupied with the all-party talks to consider the matter. The presidential election date has been fixed for October 30, with nominations to be lodged by October 1.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Left-wing magazine attacks Government

Hilary Wainwright, the Editor of the left-wing magazine *Red Pepper*, last night accused the Government of "arrogant centralised control and the disastrously conservative economics of the workhouse".

The magazine's advisers include the MP Jeremy Corbyn, the writer Ruth Rendell, who has been made a Labour working peer, and the MEP Hugh Kerr. Appraising the Government's 100 days in power, Ms Wainwright said that its "determinedly neo-liberal economics" would produce unrest and active protest. "Home Secretary Jack Straw's zero tolerance represents the criminalisation of anti-social behaviour, the policing of the social disorder caused by new Labour's economic policy."

Beckett attacked over BP

The Tories launched a fresh offensive yesterday over the shareholdings of Lord Simon, the Trade Minister and former BP chairman who is to sell all his shares in the company, accusing Margaret Beckett of misleading the Commons in answers to questions on the issue. John Redwood, the Shadow Trade Secretary, denounced a statement from the President of the Board of Trade.

Time up for mixed wards

The Government yesterday announced a drive to speed up the removal of mixed wards in the National Health Service. Baroness Jay of Paddington, the Health Minister, said that mixed accommodation should be eliminated within two years. "It is completely unacceptable for male and female patients to be in adjacent beds. Patients expect privacy and dignity, and they should have it."

Boys held over murder

Two boys aged 14 were among six suspects who appeared in court yesterday in connection with the murder of a Scottish surgeon in KwaZulu/Natal last week. They were all remanded in custody. The death of Spencer William Alexander, 38, who lived in Empangeni with his wife and three children, provoked a national outrage. The killers stabbed and shot him after hijacking his minibus.

Car thief dumped baby

A car thief left a baby to crawl by the roadside after stealing a vehicle without realising that the 11-month-old boy was in his car seat inside. The thief, 37, who admitted abduction in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, and several offences of car theft, was sentenced to four months' youth custody and disqualified from driving for two years by Hemel Hempstead youth court. The baby was found by a passer-by.

Victims of crime 'failed'

Crimes against people with learning difficulties are often not properly investigated and do not result in a conviction, a survey among 1,000 social workers found. The report in *Community Care* magazine said that two-thirds of social workers knew at least one victim — and that the offences were in some cases a social worker — but prosecutions were rare because the victims were not seen as good witnesses.

Birt a fat cat, says Bell

John Birt, the BBC Director-General, was yesterday criticised by Martin Bell, the MP for Taunton and the network's former war correspondent, for accepting an 18 per cent pay rise while rank-and-file employees received only 3 per cent. Mr Bell wrote in the *Knutsford Guardian*: "He leads the world's greatest broadcasting organisation, which should be honour enough."

Fifth soldier charged

A fifth British soldier was charged last night in connection with an attack in Cyprus on two tourists from London. The British military authorities said that there might be further arrests. Private Stuart Spencer, 20, is to appear in court this morning, with four other members of the 1st Battalion The King's Regiment, to answer charges of causing grievous bodily harm to Shane Bell and Barry Ford.

L Cpl John Tetford

Lance Corporal John Tetford (right), a military policeman in the King's Regiment at Dhekelia in Cyprus, was one of the four British soldiers who appeared in court on Tuesday after two tourists had been assaulted. L Cpl Tetford was wrongly identified by the picture agency which supplied the photograph used in yesterday's edition as one of the accused.



Welfare

Continued from page 1
introduce regional dole payment levels deserved serious consideration.

Mr Field, speaking to *The Times* last night, said he was critical of the fact that benefit staff in Exeter, where the budget was £170 million, were not free to control it.

"I want to know if it is feasible for them to manage it their way, without interference from the DSS, which has 500 offices to look after. They could take maybe up to £15 million out of the budget within the life of a Parliament. It could go to schools or hospitals. Whatever they think will help to break the dependency culture."

Under Mr Field's proposals, cash bonuses are to be offered to social security staff who help the Government in reforming the welfare bill. Incentive payments will vary depending on the savings achieved. To encourage the staff Mr Field will follow his visit to Exeter, where he spent three days, with a fact-finding tour of the benefit office in his Birkenhead constituency. Among some of the anomalies Mr Field has already identified is a presumption that benefit fraudsters are not prosecuted for sums less than £500. He said: "We can't have people breaking the law."

Woman motorist goes distance with Eubank

BY RICHARD DUCE

CHRIS EUBANK, the former world champion boxer, met his match in the shape of an angry woman who slapped him across the face after their cars almost collided in a busy street in Brighton.

Years of tough training appears to have left Eubank, an egocentric whose pomp both delights and irritates boxing audiences, ill-prepared for the verbal and physical onslaught he suffered during the furious row in his home town.

Witnesses described how Eubank, 30, who formerly held the World Boxing Organisation's middle and super-middleweight titles, simply stood in the middle of the street as the middle-aged woman set about him.

Eubank, who dresses as a monocled dandy and recently admitted "I want to be liked", seems to have been the innocent party after the woman pulled out in front of his Jeep. Alan Smith, 37, who witnessed the altercation earlier this week, said: "It was all quite unnecessary. She obviously doesn't like Eubank, but he was not doing anything



Eubank met his match on streets of Brighton

wrong. The woman came flying out of the road straight in front of Eubank's Jeep. Chris skidded to a stop, flashed his lights and beeped her.

"She stopped her car in the middle of the road and Chris got out of the Jeep and went over. She started shouting and swearing at him, then got out of her car and slapped him across the face."

"When the woman refused to move her car, Chris tried to call the police on his mobile phone but he couldn't, so in the end I called them. They must have been arguing for

about 25 minutes. As far as I could tell Chris was just waiting for her to stop ranting."

Tommy Angus, 12, and Ben Clarke, 13, also saw the incident. Tommy said: "The woman just laid into him. She was yelling that she was fed up with the way he thought he owned the road and she was late for a meeting. Eventually the police had to come to sort everything out."

Sussex police were satisfied that there was no need for any action and allowed the two motorists to go their separate ways.

At Eubank's *Gold Person* offices in Brighton yesterday there was nobody available for comment.

Eubank is no stranger to confrontation in Brighton. Earlier this year he was ordered to do 200 hours' community service after he was involved in a fireworks display which left two women badly burned.

Eubank lost his world title crown to the Irish boxer Steve Collins in 1993 and suffered a second points defeat in a rematch six months later in Cork, Ireland.

Death Row killer wins case review

BY RICHARD FORD

A MAN who murdered a four-year-old child on the tiny Caribbean island of St Vincent has won his fight to have British judges review his conviction after a court in the West Indies ruled that UK laws protecting suspects operate there.

Everley Thompson, who faces the death penalty, has appealed to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London, and claims his confessions had been beaten out of him and that he had been denied access to legal advice.

His victory in the East Caribbean Appeal Court could have far-reaching implications for any island in the West Indies which has based its own laws regarding evidence in court cases on an English model. It could mean that the protections provided for suspects in the UK, including how people are questioned and how investigations are conducted, operate in a number of Caribbean islands.

Long-range forecast looks to next century

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE prospect of four-year weather forecasts has moved a step closer with the discovery by British scientists of a vast temperature cycle in the North Atlantic.

Researchers believe that the cycle, which has been found to operate over 12 to 14 years, may be playing a key role in shaping the climate over western Europe several years into the future.

Rowan Sutton and Myles Allen of the atmospheric physics department of Oxford University believe the cycle might be used to forecast the weather up to four years ahead. Dr Sutton said yesterday that the forecasts would be less precise than the ones currently broadcast, but could indicate that the winter in 2001 was likely to be warmer or wetter and the spring, colder and drier than normal.

"Although they will never be detailed, they nevertheless could be quite useful for certain sectors, such as the reinsurance industry," Dr Sutton said in *Nature*. Other areas that could benefit from

long-term weather forecasts are the clothing industry, where manufacturers could plan to make more woollens in anticipation of colder winters and springs; farmers planning crops; water companies managing resources and power generation companies who could plan the shutdown of plant for maintenance several years in advance based on the forecast that a warmer winter will mean less demand.

Even holidaymakers or those planning a wedding could benefit. A forecast of a colder, wetter spring might prompt some people to switch their wedding and outdoor reception into the summer.

The possibilities have emerged from a study of surface sea temperature in the North Atlantic between the 1940s and 1980s where the researchers have found the 10 to 14-year pattern linked with the Gulf Stream. These changes make some parts of the Atlantic colder and other parts warmer than usual. Temperature differences in the oceans are thought to play a role in driving weather

systems because of changes in features such as evaporation. Dr Sutton said they believed that the cycle they have discovered could affect a key weather and storm-forming region off Florida which in turn drives winds, storms, airstreams and clouds across to Britain and western Europe.

"We believe that the temperature of the ocean in that region could have a particularly important influence on the weather systems and, downstream, perhaps an important effect on Europe. We are talking about relatively small changes in the ocean temperatures but these sit around, influencing climate patterns, for a long time," Dr Sutton said.

British birds are laying their eggs earlier, spurred on by global changes that hasten the arrival of spring. A study reported in *Nature* by the British Trust for Ornithology of 65 species of birds shows that in 20 of them, egg-laying has advanced by an average of 3.8 days since 1971.

Forecast, page 20

Briton on aid mission murdered by gang who escaped with £50

'Angels of Mercy' who spent 30 years taking supplies to needy in eastern Europe were set upon as they slept in camper van, reports Paul Wilkinson

A BRITISH churchman has been killed and his wife seriously injured in a late-night robbery as they returned from delivering aid to Romania. Michael Pollard, 62, a pastor with the Emmanuel Evangelical Church, and his wife Sovalleare, 55, were attacked as they slept in their camper van in Hungary early on Tuesday.

The robbers escaped with £50. Mrs Pollard, who has multiple injuries, including a broken jaw and nose, other facial and chest wounds, is being treated in intensive care and is expected to be operated on today.

Hungarian police have detained three people who confessed to the assaults. A local report, quoting police sources, said the couple's vehicle had broken down in Nyiregyhaza, a town about 150 miles south-east of Budapest. They decided to spend the night parked in a bus station when the robbers approached them, pretending to be police. They demanded a 4,000 forint (£12) fixed penalty fine for alleged illegal parking, which the Pollards paid, and then told the couple they could remain. Two hours later the men returned and attacked them with a gas spray and a steel bar.

Yesterday a Foreign Office spokesman said: "Hungarian police have already arrested three people who have confessed to the attack and the motive appears to have been robbery."

Mr Pollard, a pastor at the Emmanuel church in Baildon Green, Bradford, and his wife, known as Jo, were on a regular trip taking aid supplies collected by their church to eastern Europe. They have made the four-week journey each summer for almost 30 years. The Pollards began their charity missions after seeing Russian tanks roll in to suppress the Czech democratic movement in Prague in 1968.

The couple, who a neighbour said were deeply moved by the experience, took Bibles and other religious books to members of clandestine Christian groups suppressed and persecuted by the authorities.

In 1986 Mr Pollard, his wife and their three children were held at gunpoint by border guards after attempting to smuggle Bibles into Romania. They were released after the Bibles were confiscated. After the Iron Curtain collapsed, the couple took food, medical supplies and clothing.

The Rev Geoff Percival, who is on the board of governors of the aid group, Jubilee Outreach Yorkshire, said: "Mike made these annual trips to help the homeless and poor in other countries in eastern Europe but he worked tirelessly all year round over here."

He said Mr Pollard worked on several youth and community projects in Baildon. "He was also the chairman of Baildon Link, a local Methodist church community centre. He was very well-liked, as was his wife. They never stopped thinking of others."

Mr Pollard and his wife, born in Shipley, had taught religious education at schools in the area, including Ladderbanks Middle School in Baildon, but retired from teaching some years ago.

Cathy Todd, another member of the aid group in Skipton, North Yorkshire, said: "They were just Christians doing what they had been doing for 30 years, even before the fall of the Communists."



Michael Pollard, a pastor from west Yorkshire, and his wife, Sovalleare, who is in intensive care. Three people have admitted the assaults



Suicide man took wife's life in error

A SUICIDE ended in a double tragedy after a retired accountant accidentally killed his wife as well as himself, an inquest was told yesterday.

Ronald Rickard, 70, who suffered from chronic bronchitis and respiratory problems, left a note for his wife Margaret on the kitchen table, explaining that he wanted to die without further suffering.

He then went into the garage of their home in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, on March 9 and killed himself by channelling exhaust fumes from his Volkswagen Passat inside the car. But the fumes escaped from the garage and filled the house.

Mrs Rickard was found unconscious in bed and doctors were unable to resuscitate her. Their youngest son James was visiting his parents and awoke feeling ill from the effects of the fumes. He found the suicide note, then his father.

Post-mortem examinations found that the couple, who had three adult sons, died of carbon monoxide poisoning.

The Leamington coroner, Michael Coker, recorded a verdict of suicide on Mr Rickard, and accidental death on Mrs Rickard.

Suicide student lied about his place at college

By Peter Foster

A STUDENT who fooled his parents into thinking he had won a place at a technical college committed suicide rather than tell them the truth.

Richard Davies, 20, jumped from the Severn Bridge three weeks before he was expected to start a course in media studies. He had missed the deadline for essential coursework and had not even completed an entry form for the Open Institute College in Bolton, Lancashire.

His parents, John, 52, and Carol, 53, from Chepstow, Gwent, told yesterday of their suffering. "We blame ourselves," Mr Davies said. "If only we had noticed something was wrong or if he had told us what was going on."

An inquest at Bristol coroner's court heard how the student was seen clinging to the railings of the bridge on September 3 last year. After falling 120ft to his death his body was swept away.

After the verdict Mr and Mrs Davies said they had

sensed something was wrong with their son's application. Mr Davies even set him a deadline of September 2 for filling in the entry form. "His mum and I were worried that he was taking going away to college too casually," he added.

Mr Davies described his son as "a bright lad" who wanted to do well and had received some excellent reports from lecturers. "He didn't say he was having trouble. He didn't want to let his mum down," he added.

Mr Davies recalled how he had offered to help his son to fill out the forms. "I had a chat to him the day before he went and said if he didn't fill out the final entry forms I would help him the next day. I told him I thought he wasn't going because he was not packed or getting organised. He said to me, 'You always know'. The next day he was gone."

Paul Forrest, the coroner, recorded a verdict of suicide while depressed.

Boy with meningitis loses arms and legs

A BOY aged three has had his arms and legs amputated after contracting meningitis on holiday in Tenerife.

Kyle Barton was recovering yesterday at Sheffield Children's Hospital. Surgeons there had to operate because he had gangrene in large areas of his limbs.

Professor Stuart Tanner, one of a team of consultants caring for him, said he was making good progress and had started breathing unaided after being disconnected from a ventilator. He added: "His whole family have rallied round. They have been present for much of the time."

Kyle was first treated in a Tenerife clinic then transferred to a larger hospital on the island before being flown home. The most recent outbreak of meningitis at a holiday destination for Britons was in Majorca last summer.

Farmer badly crushed by tractor walks home

By A Staff Reporter

A FARMER who had been badly crushed under his tractor and temporarily blinded staggered home for three-quarters of a mile then took off his boots to avoid dirtying the kitchen floor before telling his wife. "I think you'd better call an ambulance."

Fred Williamson, 67, had been using the headlights of the tractor for illumination while he repaired a water tank in a field. The handbrake failed and the tractor ran over him, ripping his face with barbed wire caught in its wheels. Mr Williamson suffered broken ribs and collar bone, a punctured lung and had his face damaged beyond

recognition. His wife, Mary, 65, said at the farm in Sparrowpit, Derbyshire: "All the doctors have said he should be dead."

After the accident Mr Williamson managed to turn off the tractor engine and closed the gates behind him once he reached home. Mrs Williamson said: "All I remember is him shouting to me. He said, 'Don't panic, Mary, but I need an ambulance.' He was stood in the hallway looking like something from a horror movie. He was very calm and stood over the sink till the ambulance came."

"His jaw was smashed, his cheekbones broken and his

nose was in a thousand pieces. After eight hours of surgery he now has metal plates in his jaw and cheekbones and a bridge on his nose. Amazingly he can still see. His right eye is fine and his left eye, which was sewn back in, has double vision, but should be OK."

"He is such a fighter. The first thing he said when he came round was to ask if the water had been fixed."

In the three weeks since the accident Mr Williamson, who is in Withington Hospital, Manchester, has made "amazing progress", according to his wife. "He'll have to have a lot more surgery but at least he's alive and battling."

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Football's multimillion own goal

Small league clubs are being forced to the wall as Premiership sides pay ever higher prices for foreign players, Fraser Nelson reports

MANCHESTER UNITED has become the largest football club in Europe, reaching the top of an industry transformed by a financial revolution that will force many smaller clubs to insolvency, an independent report said yesterday.

Spiralling players' wages, over-ambitious plans to build stadiums unlikely to be filled and a flow of overseas signings which leaves British supporters bankrolling Italian football are detailed by the accountants Deloitte Touche.

In its annual review, regarded as the most authoritative report on the industry, it puts Manchester United at the top of Europe with turnover of £53.3 million for 1994-95, the latest data available. Only seven of the 92 clubs in the English league made a profit of £1 million or more.

The report forecasts that Premiership players are likely to be paid an average £310,000 this season as wages rise faster than ever. Since the £20 ceiling on player's fees was abolished in 1961 after pressure from Jimmy Hill, the increase has been left to

market forces. Players in the top English division have enjoyed 25 per cent increases for two successive seasons, pushing the Premiership's annual wage bill over £150 million.

The demand for big-name overseas players saw Fabrizio Ravanelli recruited to Middlesbrough for a reported £42,000 a week, before the club was relegated to the First Division. A transfer deal to Everton reportedly fell through because his wage demands were unrealistic.

In recent weeks other transfers have included Arsenal's signing of Mark Overmars for £7 million, on a reported salary of £18,000 per week, and Crystal Palace paying £1.6 million for Antonio Lombardo.

Manchester United are understood to have added £5 million to their annual wage bill this season to hold on to players. That kind of budget, the report says, is putting First Division clubs under pressure to match the salaries. But because Premiership clubs claim much larger profits, directors of First Division clubs believe the prospect of promotion is worth the gamble.

The report found that in the 1995-96 season British football made a loss of £98 million after £93 million was drained from the country by the rush to buy overseas players. That, it says, is creating a bizarre situation where the season-ticket money from British supporters can end up being channelled into the cost of Inter Milan's purchase of the Brazilian star Ronaldo.

Geary Boon, a senior partner at Deloitte Touche, said:



Heavy investment: Fabrizio Ravanelli and his minders arriving at the Riverside Stadium recently to discuss his contract with Middlesbrough

"We don't have exact figures for how much is going into overseas clubs but you can bet that a fair slug of Italian football is being paid for by the British this season."

The report concluded that clubs should trim their expenditure plans to match their size, not their ambitions. Part of the problem was identified as serial stadium building, where small clubs borrow to build huge stadiums they have little chance of filling. Mr Boon said: "This is a real worry for a lot of clubs. They

ask for 25,000-seater stadiums without asking how many times they have had 25,000 crowds. The only way they would fill it is for championship matches, and these come once in a blue moon."

He said football was showing that it was willing to take ever-greater financial risks but that would send far more clubs to the wall. "What put the clubs in difficulty is that they constantly spend more than they earn. Previously they have balanced the books

by selling a player or finding a local person willing to buy the club for emotional reasons and suffer the losses."

The Bosman decision has shattered the certainty of selling a player and the losses of the smaller clubs are getting so deep that they will have difficulty finding a local supporter with pockets deep enough to manage it."

Manchester United's wage bill of £13.3 million in 1995-96 was less than half of AC Milan's £31.4 million, the highest in Europe. Mr Boon

said: "Manchester United is top in the world in terms of income, profitability and probably in terms of controlling their wage bill. It has structured its business and developed its brand so that business success is not entirely dependent upon on-the-field success."

He contrasted that with Newcastle United, the league runners-up, who made the biggest loss, with a deficit of £23.6 million. "When Eric Cantona announced his retirement, United's share price

fell by just 1 per cent," Mr Boon said. "But when Alan Shearer was badly injured recently Newcastle's share price plummeted 6 or 7 per cent," he said.

Mr Boon said the new deal between the Premiership and BSkyB would accentuate the divide. The average Premiership club could expect television revenue of £5.5 million this season while the best that those outside could hope for was about £1 million.

Di Canio moves, page 40

Arrests at games down by a third

By Richard Ford
HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE number of people arrested at football matches fell by more than a third over the past four seasons, although the decline now seems to have levelled out. Arrests in or around soccer club grounds remained steady at 4,400 last season, the figures from the National Criminal Intelligence Service show.

A breakdown of the figures between the 1992-93 season and 1996-97 also disclosed that while arrests at first and third division clubs have halved, arrests at FA Carling Premiership clubs have remained the same. There were 961 arrests outside Premiership club grounds, 456 outside first division grounds, 265 outside second and 169 outside third division grounds.

Detective Superintendent Bryan Drew said the drop in arrests was achieved by close co-operation between the service and police officers. "The majority of serious offences are the work of organised hooliganism," he said.

"Developing good-quality intelligence remains the key to stifling attempts to cause trouble."

The number of soccer-related arrests in 1992-93 was 6,327 compared with 4,400 last season. With attendance over the same period up from 24.5 million to more than 26 million, the number of arrests per 100,000 spectators fell from 25.8 to 16.7.

Drink-related offences formed the largest category of offences in 1996-97.

Inspectors are hard pressed to nose out a good pub wine

By Robin Young

THE standard of wine on sale in pubs is failing to keep pace with that sold in supermarkets and off-licence chains, according to Which?

The magazine, published by the Consumers' Association, investigated pub wines ten years ago and found that "far too many were unpleasant and overpriced". This year the magazine sent inspectors to 70 pubs around the country to test the wines on sale and put 25 of the best-selling wines from major brewery chains into a blind tasting session with an expert panel.

The experts visited a wide range of pubs — 15 in Scotland, five in Wales and 55 throughout England. At

as cheaply as possible... and hang the quality."

Another expert wrote: "The supermarkets and multiple specialists have proved that it is possible to find fresh, fruity wines — red and white — at the cheapest price possible, so why can't the big breweries which have so much buying power?"

The inspectors found that pubs were offering more wines than ten years ago, with 25 per cent selling more than four white wines and 10 per cent offering four types of red. But they found that pubs' printed wine lists could not be trusted. More than 65 per cent of the pubs visited had a list of wines on display, but in nearly 20 per cent none of the listed wines was available.

Of the seven breweries whose bestselling wines were included in the test, Young's came out best, supplying the two top-scoring wines in the tasting. Wines from Fuller's pubs also fared relatively well. Westspon pub wine came out well in the survey, with six out of seven establishments inspected rated as having good wine, and the seventh excellent. The chain also scored well on price. Its wine by the glass was cheaper than average.

In general, the researchers found that customers did not receive better wine by paying more for it. However, pubs that served good wine of one colour tended to have a good glass of the other available as well.

Leading article... 15

though they found a wider range of wines on offer than in past years, and the measures were bigger, the tests found that the quality was still lacking.

The experts found themselves unable to recommend a single one of the 14 best-selling white wines they were offered, and of the 11 reds they would recommend only three. They commented that palatable wines were few and far between, that there was an overall dullness about the selections and that too many of the wines were badly made. One of the experts commented: "The overall impression is that pubs are concerning themselves with buying wines



Mozart and Beethoven: their style is emulated

Composers give encores by computer

By Nick Nuttall, Technology Correspondent

MOZART, Beethoven and Delius are composing again, courtesy of a computer which, it is claimed, can create works in the style of the great composers.

The computer program, called Experiments in Musical Intelligence, has had a symphony, entitled *Mozart's 42nd Symphony*, performed by a college orchestra at the University of Santa Cruz, California. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who died in 1791, wrote 41 symphonies. The program has also produced works in the style of Brahms, Chopin, Rachmaninov and Scott Joplin.

In the space of three months it also churned out 5,000 "original" works, including 1,500 symphonies, 2,000 piano sonatas and 1,500 miscellaneous pieces.

The program is the brainchild of the composer and computer expert David Cope, who is based at the Santa Cruz university. He originally devised it to help him to overcome his composer's block.

It is based on the principle of "musical dice games" once employed by some 18th century composers. Beginning with fragments of music, they would write new works by arranging the fragments according to dice throws. In the same way, the computer takes pieces of music, breaks them up into tiny bits and reassembles them. To avoid producing gibberish, it applies an understanding of the grammar and syntax of music.

"The distinctive sound of a particular composer is cap-

tured using a "pattern matcher". Examples of the composer's music are sifted for characteristic sequences. These "signatures" are dropped into the composition at just the points where the real composer would have used them.

Not all experts are delighted by the arrival of the electronic composer. Douglas Hofstadter, a cognitive scientist at the University of Indiana who studies computer creativity and who is a pianist, told *New Scientist*: "The program has no model whatsoever of life experience, has no sense of itself, has no sense of Chopin, has never heard a note of music, has not a trace in it of where I think music comes from."

"I'm comparing that with an entire human soul, one forged by the struggles and travails of life... and all the experiences that create emotion, turmoil, despair, resignation: everything you want to think of that goes into building a character."

Nevertheless, Dr Hofstadter admitted to being stunned when he played a Chopin mazurka written by the program. "It sounded, except for a few glitches, as if it could slide right into the book of Chopin mazurkas," he said.

Critics have said that the works, while impressive, sound like the efforts of lesser composers trying to emulate the work of the great masters. However, comparing its music to that of Mozart's contemporary and rival, Antonio Salieri, Dr Cope told *New Scientist*: "This music is better than that."

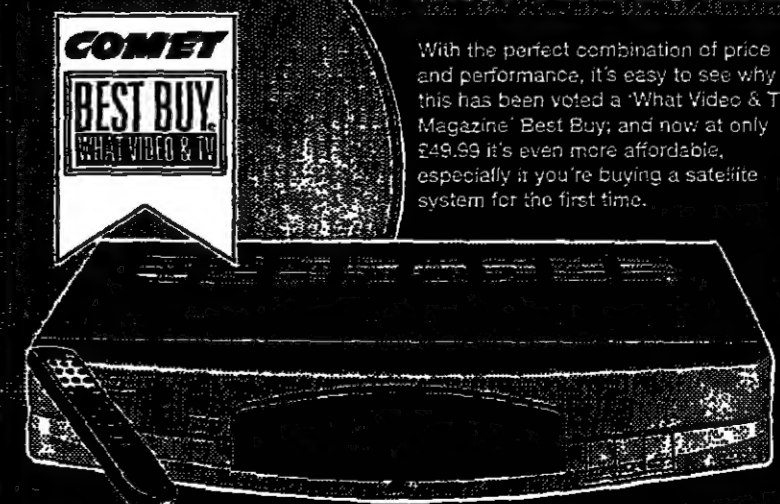
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Students in gap trap can sue for fees, says lawyer

Those who deferred university entry may be able to claim exemption from charges, reports David Charter

STUDENTS unable to reverse plans for a "gap year" will be able to bring a legal case against the Government to claim exemption from the first university course fees in 1998, a leading education lawyer said yesterday.

Jack Rabinowitz said the Government would inevitably face a challenge if students who deferred starting at university before its announcement on fees were unable to switch back.

Thousands of teenagers who originally applied to put off their university place are expected to join the scramble to begin studies this year to avoid the scrapping of grants and introduction of annual £1,000 fees next year. But many will be caught in the so-called "gap trap" shut out from university this October because their courses are already full.

The deadline for university applications was December 15, seven months before the Government's response to Sir Ron Dearing's report on higher education. Details of a new loan system have yet to be announced and students starting university from 1998 face average debts of £12,000 at graduation.

Fees will not be charged in 1998 for students who start this year, which Mr Rabinowitz, a member of the Education Law Association, claims could be unfair on the 26,000



Dearing his reforms face court challenge

who applied for deferred entry. Around 19,000 are believed to hold offers conditional on A-level results, which come out next Thursday.

"These students would have a reasonable argument because of the concept of legitimate expectation that a public body would act in a certain way," Mr Rabinowitz said. "It is at least arguable, and possibly more than that, that there was an entitlement to resist fees."

However, a spokesman for the Department for Education and Employment said the educational agreement with

the university was separate from the funding arrangement with the Government. He added: "The fees regime starts in 1998, so students must make the judgment about whether deferring is more important than the fees. There are issues on which some netizens have to be grasped and now is the time for grasping them."

Mr Rabinowitz described this statement as "extremely glib". He added: "If the arrangements have already been agreed with the university, you cannot necessarily backtrack. If the Government is not prepared to accommodate these students, there will inevitably be litigation."

Organisations which run gap-year activities are worried that fees will put youngsters off. Levia Bristol, director of Project Trust, which sends teenagers into year-long voluntary work placements in schools, farms and communities around the world, said the gap-year concept was under threat.

"Things are stacking up against people taking a year out. There was a lot of talk under the last Government about the desirability of volunteering, but one does not see much evidence of people taking this seriously. We would be very disappointed if this put people off taking a year out."

Leading article, page 15

'Taking a year out might cost me up to £12,000'

WORLD travel seems a doubly expensive option for students caught in the "gap trap" by the Government's imposition of tuition fees from next year.

Leeds University agreed to Daisy Minton's request before Easter to defer her place to study English literature for a year. She planned to travel in Italy and America, applying in Italy to help to pay her way.

The 18-year-old from Huddersfield contacted Leeds immediately after last month's announcement on fees to claim her place this autumn — only to be told the course was full.

Ms Minton, who is waiting to hear if she has gained the two As and a B Leeds requires,

is torn between waiting a year and facing costs of up to £12,000, or going to her second-choice university, Sheffield, which wants an A and two Bs, though she could start in October but will not know for certain until the A-level results are published.

"I really don't know what to do. I have had my heart set on this year out," Ms Minton, who studied at Huddersfield New College, said. "I am in a real dilemma. My career adviser thinks I should reconsider but I tried really hard at my A levels and just wanted a break from studying."

She believes the thousands of students who applied for a gap year based on the system of free tuition and student grants have been put in a

terrible situation. A Labour voter, she said that she felt betrayed by the Government's decision to introduce tuition fees and end student grants.

"When I made my decision to delay going to university, I was completely unaware that the year out might cost me up to £12,000," she said.

"Now, a week before I get my results, before I face the most frantic clearing procedure ever known, I am told seriously to reconsider my decision. I think it is a crucial decision before knowing the facts of whether to try to cancel my time out. The stress is incredible waiting for A-level results and has only been increased by the Government's decision."



Baby ostriches need to be led on runs, preferably by someone who doesn't mind impersonating their father



Brood pursues a father on the run

By A Staff Reporter

BABYSITTING a brood of newly hatched ostriches involves rather more than making sure they go to bed on time. It demands skills more in the line of being able to run at 20mph without stepping on any of the eight-inch high balls of fluff creaking around your ankles. It also helps if you can flap your arms like wings at the same time.

In the wild, as soon as chicks are hatched, the father runs off at top speed — followed by his brood. But unless Malvern Hills Children's Zoo can find two volunteers willing to impersonate a male ostrich for two hours a day, the four baby ostriches are unlikely to develop the leg muscles they

need, and might even have to be put down.

Christopher Cox, who owns the zoo in Welland, Worcestershire, and is the present surrogate parent, said the brood was born later than usual and he needed the babysitters — or baby runners — because staff did not have time. "He or she would have to be quite fit, because if you stop running, the ostriches sit down," he said.

A top athlete like Linford Christie would be ideal but any fit individual who is patient and who doesn't mind flapping their arms like a bird would be great.

The chicks think you're their father. They have good eyesight, but they are not very clever."

Charcoal fuels monkey boom

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

RED colobus monkeys in Zanzibar have developed a craving for charcoal, apparently because it enables them to eat plants that would otherwise poison them.

The monkeys eat up to 5 grams of charcoal a day, according to the American zoologists Thomas Struhsaker and David Cooney. The small animals get the charcoal from burnt trees and palm stumps, abandoned kilns and the hearths of villagers.

Charcoal has the effect of soaking up toxins in the

diet. All colobus monkeys eat young leaves, which are often full of compounds such as phenols and tannins. While the charcoal absorbs only a third as much toxin as commercially available activated charcoal, it clearly helps.

Dr Struhsaker says the monkeys now eat the leaves of the Indian almond and mango trees, both of which contain potent toxins. The result was that the population of the monkeys was shooting up, to more than 700 per square kilometre, he told *New Scientist*.

Stolen property seized in raids on baggage handlers

By A Staff Reporter

POLICE found stolen property worth thousands of pounds when they raided the homes of baggage handlers at Manchester Airport after a surveillance operation on the international terminals.

Among the goods recovered were cameras, jewellery, binoculars, clothing and personal stereos. Five men aged between 20 and 40 were arrested then released on bail. They work for Sigma Aviation (UK) Ltd. No one from the baggage handling firm was available for comment yesterday.

Undercover police kept watch at the airport for several

weeks after an increase in thefts from passengers' luggage. About a hundred items a week were being reported missing. The goods seized in the raids on Tuesday are believed to have been taken during the previous week.

Officers from the Greater Manchester force's tactical operations unit simultaneously searched houses in Cheadle, Chorlton cum Hardy, Denton, Hale, Stretford and Wythenshawe. Yesterday they were beginning the difficult task of tracing the owners of the stolen goods. They will be checking items against their

records and plan to set up a telephone helpline.

Chief Inspector Tim Burgess, based at Manchester Airport, said yesterday: "I'm delighted that professional police work by skilled officers has given us the first successes in tackling this problem."

"The difficulty for the police in the past has been in establishing where thefts have taken place — whether at Manchester or while baggage was in transit. This operation seems to indicate that there is a problem here which we are determined to eradicate. More operations are planned."

All systems go in Britain's greenest home

Global warming poses no threat to one architect, reports Nick Nuttall

THERE was a time when Neil Winder's grand plan for an environmentally sound home seemed to be going down the pan. And coming back up again.

After a year-long trial, Mr Winder, who has designed his own "green home", disclosed that the family's eco-friendly lavatory had needed urgent modification after becoming somewhat malodorous. Another difficulty was the water-filtering system designed to purify bath and kitchen effluent through reed beds, which became clogged with grease.

Undeterred, Mr Winder, an architect whose house is at Palgrave, Suffolk, introduced a straw trap through which the waste water runs first. He

also found that wheat straw is better than barley straw for filtering out grease.

The lavatory, which is designed to save water and help to compost the sewage for use as garden fertiliser, is flushed by throwing straw and mugsful of sawdust down the pan. "A smell and a fly problem was completely overcome by altering the flow," Mr Winder said.

The walls of the four-bedroom house are filled with an 8in layer of recycled paper, which enables it to "breathe" so it can respond quickly to temperature changes. The house is heated by a three-ton stove burning wood.

The house stands up to 2½ft above ground on a dozen concrete stilts which sit on



Neil Winder outside his environmentally sound home

foundations of individual concrete pads. The stilts will protect the building against flash floods and subsidence. "With separate concrete pads as foundations it means we will not have any problems planting trees or plants near the house," Mr Winder said. "During hot summers the leaves of climbing plants

around the windows will help to filter heat out of the air. The leaves will not be there in the winter when we want to let in more light."

The house also has a strengthened roof with additional timbers and clay pan-tiles held in place by extra nails to withstand gales. Mr Winder included timber gut-

tering that is twice the normal size to cope with storms, which he fears may become more common.

Mr Winder has designed sensors to seal off the electricity supply to bedrooms after the lights are turned off to minimise electro-magnetic fields, which some scientists believe might cause cancer.

The house cost Mr Winder about £68,000 to build, the equivalent of a conventional brick home. He paid a farmer £39,000 for the 0.6 acre plot after getting planning permission from Mid Suffolk Council, which was runner-up in a contest to find Britain's greenest council.

"The predictions are that weather is going to get much more extreme," Mr Winder said. "I feel we ought to be thinking about how to deal with the problem now rather than waiting until our houses stop functioning properly."

Blunkett seeks to tackle heads shortage

By David Charter, Education Correspondent

THE Government is seeking increased pay for senior primary school staff to avert an impending shortage of head teachers. David Blunkett will ask the independent teachers' pay body to even up salary difference between primary and secondary schools.

The Education Secretary told the School Teachers' Review Body yesterday to create a grade of Advanced Skills Teacher, with higher pay, to reward those who stay in the classroom rather than seeking a management role, as promised in Labour's election manifesto. He is also seeking to tackle long-standing problems encountered by primary schools in bringing men into the profession and retaining senior staff. Primaries are receiving fewer applications for headships and the number of schools re-advertising posts is rising, according to surveys for *The Times Educational Supplement*.

Head teachers' pay is closely linked to the numbers of pupils in their school, with the largest primary school paying £33,000 compared with £50,000 at big secondary schools. The Government's pledge to limit infant class sizes to 30 would restrict primary head teachers' pay under this system.

Mr Blunkett intends that the Advanced Skills Teachers would help to spread best practice among new teachers. The current classroom pay limit is £21,318.

"We need to ensure that those who are in the service for 20 to 30 years have a career structure, have hope of improvement without having to go into management and administrative posts. If you are keeping the best in the classroom, if they are sharing their skills with others, then you're achieving the goals we have set out," Mr Blunkett told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme.

Of the extra £835 million for schools allocated in the Budget, £330 million is expected to go towards next year's teachers' pay award. Teachers' unions reacted angrily to the "super teacher" plans, saying all teachers should be rewarded with extra pay.

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said: "I want teachers to be rewarded for the job they do and to be given financial recognition for the demands that are placed on them. That's something I want for all teachers."

The review body will make its recommendations on pay levels in time for the next pay round, in February.

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Pakistan loses faith in democracy as dream turns sour

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN LAHORE

A THIRD of Pakistanis, sick of corrupt politicians and decrepit democracy, favour a return to dictatorship, a startling finding as the country prepares for its 50th birthday next week. The "impossible dream" of Pakistan, realised by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, remains for millions today an unfulfilled promise.

The Islamic state — Jinnah never wanted it to become one, but that betrayal of the father of the nation is glossed over — is in a deep crisis that can only be described in superlatives, so dire are its problems. The country's very survival is at stake as Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister, holds in his grasp the power to destroy or save what is left of public faith in elected government.

None of his towering promises in February's general election has been fulfilled, least of all the promise of clean government. His first administration, in power from 1990 to 1993 was the most corrupt the country has known, and nothing indicates that his new Government is any better. It has 34 ministers with the rank of federal minister, all but one of them the same people who



50 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

bungled before. The plunder continues apace. The mood on the streets is angry. Unprecedented food riots in April, when the provinces of North West Frontier, Sindh and Baluchistan ran short of wheat, were a reminder of how close Pakistan is to calamity. Islamic extremists have most to gain from this nationwide despair. Dictatorships have failed, democracy is failing, and there seems nowhere to turn: fertile ground for the religious Right, although it is enfeebled by divisions within its own ranks.

"I am frightened of what will happen to Pakistan if Nawaz Sharif fails," Najam Sethi, Editor of the respected *Friday Times*, said. "Fifty years down the line we stand on the brink. By now we should have cobbled together a nation state and a political

system that works. India did it in ten years, but we haven't done it in 50. We are still floundering."

Pakistan lacks India's sense of roots and identity. India assumed the history of the subcontinent in 1947, as well as the key institutions of government, banking and politics, leaving the new nation with nothing but the army — still the ultimate power — to hold it together. It even started life without a currency: legions of workers rubber-stamped mountains of Indian banknotes with the word "Pakistan" until the new nation was able to design and print its own money.

It took 23 years to hold the first free election, which ushered in a civilian despot, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, hanged by the military nine years later. Democracy has never been allowed to last. There have been five periods of full or partial martial law, lasting 18 years, six abortive military coups and three periods under states of emergency. Only one president has completed his term, prime ministers have been dismissed eight times, one prime minister was assassinated, one executed, and eight parliaments have been prematurely dissolved.

Partition in 1947 was a victory for Islamic nationalism, a tragedy for India, and neither country observes the anniversary next week with any real sense of celebration: India because independence was coupled with amputation, Pakistan because so many dreams are unfulfilled. The *Friday Times* found in a survey to be published later this week that 21 per cent of people favour military dictatorship, 14 per cent civilian dictatorship.

Jinnah, monocled, suited and in a tie, drank liberally, chain-smoked (Craven A, which helped kill him) and showed no religious inclinations. His doctor said he had survived for a decade on "willpower, whisky and cigarettes". So removed was he from the masses that he could not deliver his speeches in Urdu.

His dream of creating Pakistan may never have been realised had one secret leaked out: he was dying in the run-up to Pakistan's creation, and its opponents would have



A surface-to-surface missile launcher is paraded past a portrait of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's founder, during rehearsals for independence celebrations

bought time had they known, aware that without Jinnah the dream would remain impossible. There would, additionally, never have been a Bangladesh, and India would not have lost two limbs.

□ Delhi: A senior Indian provincial government official has lost his job for calling Jinnah a hero of the Indian independence struggle, the *Indian Express* reported yesterday. Govind Swaroop has

been switched from his job as Maharashtra's cultural affairs secretary by the state government after he described Jinnah a "great freedom fighter" on a television programme, the paper said. (AFP)

WORLD SUMMARY

Cambodia prince replaced

Phnom Penh: Cambodia's politicians have elected Ung Huot, 52, the former Foreign Minister, as the country's new Prime Minister. (Caroline Gluck writes). He replaces Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who was overthrown in a military coup last month by Hun Sen, his rival co-Prime Minister.

The MPs voted by 86 to 4, with 6 abstentions, in a secret ballot to accept Ung Huot's nomination. He is regarded by many as a non-confrontational and somewhat malleable figure.

Hun Sen said that the parliamentary vote showed that democracy was alive and well in Cambodia.

Naked MP 'did nothing wrong'

Sydney: Alan Corbett, a member of the New South Wales state parliament who was elected on a platform of promoting family values, said there was nothing wrong with his swimming naked with his girlfriend and six-year-old son in a parliamentary pool.

He said he decided to strip when he arrived and found his girlfriend and son swimming naked, although he knew that there was a sign at the pool saying MPs "should be appropriately dressed". (Reuters)

Concert deaths

Lima: Two girls died and another 107 fans were injured at an overcrowded outdoor Latin American music concert, Peruvian police said. Hysteria among the 100,000 audience turned to chaos when the duo Servando y Florentino, came back on stage for an encore after their show. The Horse Show park has a capacity for 40,000 people. (Reuters)

Freedom move

Grozny: Taking steps to reduce Russian control and increase the country's independence before he meets President Yeltsin for talks, President Maskhadov of Chechnya announced that the republic will begin issuing its own passports and vehicle number-plates and will open an embassy in Moscow. (AP)

Mother's despair

Sana'a: The 40-year-old wife of an unemployed Yemeni drowned their five small children in a pond out of despair at their poverty, according to the *Yemeni Times*. The paper said the woman killed the children, aged between 18 months and nine years, one by one. She later tried to bury them. (AFP)

Graveyard shift

Beijing: China has issued regulations banning cemeteries in many areas to conserve scarce farmland and declaring cremation to be the standard funeral practice, newspapers reported here. The move is the latest step in a campaign to stop burials nationwide. (AP)

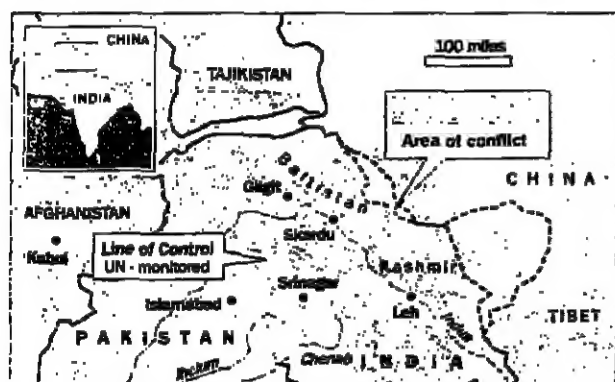
Landslide body

Thredbo: Rescuers have found another body, the fifth, in the rubble of last week's landslide at this Australian ski village. Three people are still missing in the mud and wreckage of two ski lodges. (Reuters)

Learning by stoat

Wellington: Stoats won a high-jump contest with leaps of more than 6ft in tests to determine the height of a protective fence for a planned bird sanctuary — beating rats, cats and possums. (AP)

Futile mountain conflict as neighbours fight over glacier



FROM ZAHID HUSSAIN IN PAKISTAN-CONTROLLED SIACHEN

THE silence of the snow-covered mountain peaks is broken by the thunder of intermittent artillery fire. At 20,000ft, even in summer, the temperature is between -20C and -30C, and normal breathing can be difficult. The troops of Pakistan and India continue to fight one of the world's toughest battles.

The two countries' forces exchange more than 800 rounds of artillery fire every day to try to consolidate their positions on the Siachen Glacier.

where there is no sign of life or vegetation. The cost of war in human lives and financial resources is exorbitant, but neither bitter rival is ready to give up its claim over a terrain which has little strategic value.

For 13 years the two armies have been locked in battle over the glacier. Despite the latest peace moves by the leaders of India and Pakistan, there seems to be no lessening of hostility on this front.

Both countries have lost thousands of soldiers to bad weather conditions and combat. Seventy-five per cent of the casualties are caused by the harsh

environment and high altitude. The majority of victims experience frostbite, altitude sickness and cerebral and pulmonary swellings. Many suffer from psychological problems.

The battle for the Siachen Glacier has caused a massive drain on the scarce resources of the two countries. Millions of pounds are spent to maintain supply lines to high-altitude snow-covered military posts. The only link with the front line is by helicopter. Snowstorms often break all supply lines.

Pakistan military commanders admit that it is a futile war with very

high losses. But the growing realisation of futility has not been translated into a serious move to end the war.

The Siachen conflict flared in 1984 when India and Pakistan moved their armies forward in the demilitarised zone, and established their positions on the glacier.

They almost agreed to pull back their troops to pre-conflict positions in 1989, but the move was stalled as tension heightened over the Himalayan state of Kashmir.

The conflict will top the agenda when the countries' foreign secretaries meet in Delhi next month.

Refugees 'will be able to go home'

BY MICHAEL BINYON DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

TWO of the signatories of the Dayton peace accord agreed yesterday that the return of Bosnian refugees to their homes would be slower than they hoped, but reaffirmed the right of all to go back.

President Tudjman of Croatia and President Izetbegovic of Bosnia met in Split to co-ordinate their positions before the arrival of Richard Holbrooke, the American convenor of the Dayton summit. Mr Holbrooke arrived in the Adriatic resort yesterday to warn the Balkan leaders that the West was losing patience.

In a joint statement signed after their meeting the two leaders promised further co-operation, on the peace plan. Their meeting came only a few days after drunken rioting and intimidation by Croats prevented about 500 Muslim refugees from returning to their homes in Jajce. Both men have also been warned by European ministers that they face sanctions if they continue to flout the Dayton accord.

Mr Izetbegovic tried to downplay the failure by all three ethnic groups to overcome their difference by saying: "We had overestimated the possibility of implementing something like the return of refugees."

Cape Town enlists Sexy Boys and The Firm in bid for 2004 Olympics

FROM R.W. JOHNSON IN CAPE TOWN

"THE Olympics will create jobs; we support the Olympics," says Rashied Staggie, joining in the general hype aimed at attracting the 2004 Olympic Games to Cape Town.

Mr Staggie is not just another municipal politician plugging his city's bid: he is the head of one of Cape Town's toughest criminal gangs, the Hard Livings, and is believed to control the cocaine trade in the whole Western Cape region.

Mr Staggie's testimony is just one more sign of how desperately hard South Africa is trying to attract the Olympics to Cape Town. Even in the rival cities of Johannesburg and Durban there are posters saying: "If Cape Town wins, we all win." Indeed, the whole country has entered into the emotional struggle to mount Africa's first Olympics.

There are many problems about Cape Town's bid. Realistically, South Africa's entrance should have been Durban, which has a far better climate during the Olympic months, more hotel rooms and better sports facilities. But Cape Town is South Africa's mother city in much the same way that Boston is America's and that always made it an emotionally more

plausible bidder. It is one of the world's most beautiful cities, but the climate in June-December is cold, windy and wet. The city has only 400 registered taxis, only 1,200 buses, which are used mainly by the poor and the footloose, and a rail network that many are scared to travel on.

The city's Olympic Bid Committee estimates that up to 300,000 people would visit the city every day in Olympic year and yet the city has only 18,000 hotel beds. More worrying still, in the last week of the 1996 Olympics 600,000 people a day poured through Atlanta airport and even patriotic locals doubt the ability of Cape Town airport to handle a tenth of that number.

South Africa is suffering a national neurosis over the bid for other reasons, though. First, South Africa is deeply conscious of the isolation inflicted on the country by the apartheid period and Cape Town's ability to capture the Olympics has become a question of whether the country can successfully reintegrate itself into the world beyond.

Moreover, Cape Town has become South Africa's most fashionable city, home to Earl Spencer, Diana, Princess of Wales's brother, and international celebrities. A flight of



A young member of The Americans, one of the gangs backing the bid

upper-income whites from Johannesburg towards Cape Town is in progress, so that if Cape Town is not adjudged good enough for the Olympics, South Africa as a whole will feel that it has been found wanting.

Most of all, South Africa worries that its crime wave is driving away foreign investment and tourism. Hence the appearance of the strange figure of Mr Staggie. Cape Town has the highest incidence of rape in the world and the second-highest murder rate after Johannesburg.

Moreover, the Cape Flats have long been plagued by

gang warfare on an infamous scale. Apart from the Hard Livings, there are the Sexy Boys, the Americans, the Scorpions and The Firm. The leaders of all these gangs have been organised by Mr Staggie into the Community Outreach Forum and collectively they are promising to cut back on murder, robbery, rape, vandalism and child prostitution to boost the city's Olympic hopes.

"Only the gangsters can restore security in the communities they have terrorised," says Ivan Waldeck, a leader of the forum, who says that his life has been changed (after a ten-year jail sentence for murder) by what he calls an "holistic" revelation.

The forum, he claims, has reformed about 130 gangs with 30,000 members. They were all products of apartheid, he says, and are now willing to change.

Michael Fuller, finance director of the Olympic Bid Committee, cordially welcomes the gangsters' support, but the police remain sceptical. "For the moment crime is still being perpetrated and there is no significant change. The official position is that police do not talk with gangsters," a police spokesman said.

France sees danger of fundamentalism in Comoros revolt

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FRENCH politicians warned yesterday that growing demands for a resumption of French rule over the Comoros islands in the Indian ocean could destabilise the entire region and play into the hands of Islamic fundamentalists.

With the secessionist revolt spreading from Anjouan to Moheli, two of the four islands that make up the Comorian archipelago, what began as an odd, even flattering anachronism is fast turning into an embarrassing crisis for France. The islands declared independence in 1975, with the exception of Mayotte which voted by referendum to remain French.

Envious of the comparative prosperity of Mayotte, pro-French secessionists on Anjouan last Sunday declared their independence from the Comoros Islamic Federal Republic and appointed a provisional government. Riot police yesterday clashed with demonstrators on the smaller island of Moheli, after they raised the French tricolour over government buildings.

The separatists in Fomboni, the main town on Moheli, were reported to have hoisted the yellow-and-black flag of Queen Fatima Djoumbé, the

last ruler of Moheli before colonisation.

France, which is seeking military disengagement from its former African colonies, has refused to heed the calls for a return to French rule, insisting the situation is a matter for the government in Moroni on Grande Comore, the largest island.

Jacques Godfrain, a minister in France's previous conservative Government, warned that the situation should not be treated lightly. "Iran is among the countries bordering on the Indian Ocean, and the situation in an Islamic republic in the heart of the Indian Ocean must be followed with the closest attention," he said.

Noting that the three independent Comoros islands are "envious" of their French neighbour, M. Godfrain said that "maintaining levels of development in the three islands is essential to prevent feelings of inequality in comparison with Mayotte."

Meanwhile, the new leader in Anjouan, Abdullah Ibrahim, yesterday held the first meeting of his "cabinet" which ordered a check into the amount of money left in government coffers.

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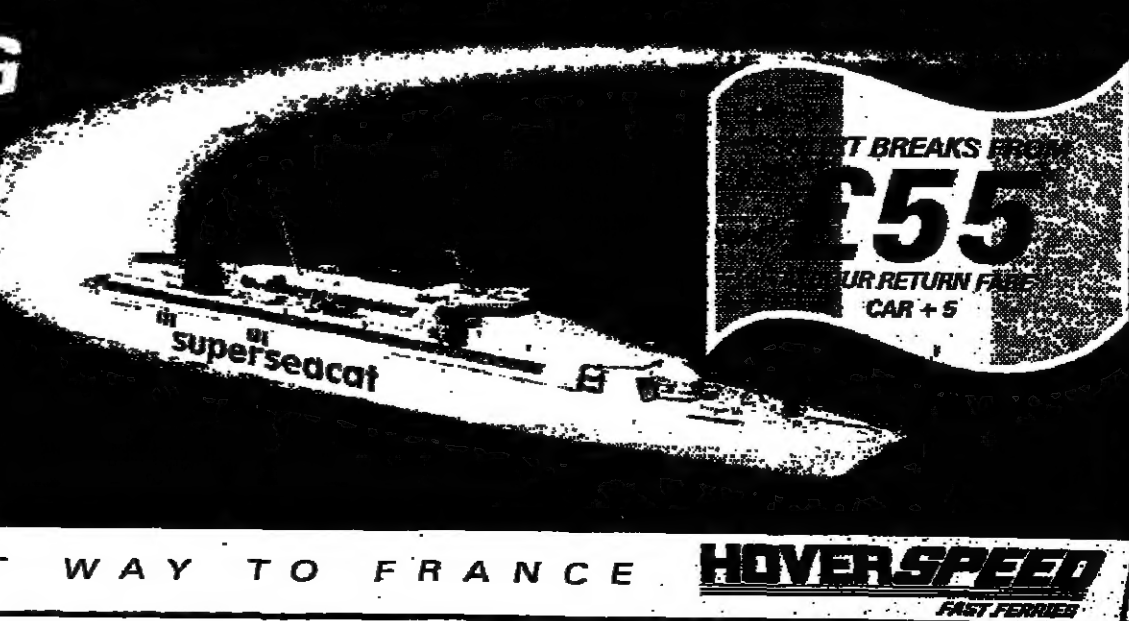
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Wreckage of Korean Air's Flight 801 lies strewn across Sasa Valley in Guam yesterday. The crash is being blamed on a combination of bad weather, equipment failure and pilot error

Victims' families protest to airline

By GILES WHITTELL AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

AS HOPES faded yesterday that more survivors would be found in the wreckage of Korean Air Flight 801, investigators turned to the jet's two "black boxes" and to the stories of miraculous escape in the hope of explaining the disaster.

At least two passengers were able to walk away from the jet, which was carrying 254. In all, 32 passengers went by helicopter to island hospitals. Four later died as US Navy engineers led the search for bodies, and it was thought others might not survive.

President Kim Young Sam of South Korea spoke of the "overflowing sorrow" of victims' relatives gathered at Seoul's Gimpo airport.

Distraught relatives in Seoul and Agaña, the capital of Guam, protested over the confusion that surrounded the fate of passengers as the airline said it could not confirm the exact number of survivors and could not release any names.

The protesters also complained that casualty figures which put the number of survivors at up to 50, raised false hopes.

Rush-hour traffic in Seoul came to a standstill during a 30-minute protest near Gimpo international airport.

The protesters in Seoul were among 500 relatives who waited all day at a Korean Air building for word on the fate of their loved ones. Some broke down in despair.

At Agaña, relatives confronted Shim Im Taek, Korean Air's vice-president, at a hotel meeting. "It's not apolo-

gies and technical information we need now," an elderly man said. "Tell us about the fate of our loved ones before discussing black boxes and such."

Some people have still a bit of hope here," another middle-aged Korean man said, urging the airline to publish the names of survivors.

Had the jet continued flying for another 30 seconds there would have been "massive death on the ground", said Ray Gibson, a radio producer who lives near the crash site. "It would have gone into

The last words: 'I can make it'

The pilot of the ill-fated Korean Air Boeing 747 reportedly said "I can make it" before his plane crashed into the Guam jungle, Korean residents said.

The residents told arriving reporters that they had learnt of the pilot's last words from the control tower at Guam International airport. "The report could not be independently confirmed," AFP.

neighbourhoods, into homes instead of hills and grass."

As an 18-member investigative team from the National Transportation Safety Board arrived in Guam yesterday it emerged that in addition to being without a "glide slope indicator" to aid incoming aircraft, the international airport is the only one in the US certified to receive wide-bodied jets that uses contracted air traffic controllers, rather than Federal Aviation Administration employees.

By nightfall yesterday, after a 17-hour search, 69 bodies had been pulled from the charred scrub and saw grass on Nimitz Hill, three miles from the airport, where the plane skidded through undergrowth for hundreds of yards, rupturing a nearby fuel pipeline and disintegrating.

The last survivor was rescued around noon yesterday and the grim search for the bodies of more than 150 passengers still unaccounted for — many of them honeymooners and tourists from Korea — was expected to resume at first light today.

Within minutes of the disaster, a few passengers were stumbling from their seats through thick smoke. Hong Hyon Song, in a first-class seat in Row 13, said he felt the plane's undercarriage go down and thought the flight had landed.

"I thought the plane was skidding off the runway to the grass near by," he said, "but when I looked out I saw trees rushing past the windows. Then suddenly there was a bang and the plane hit the ground."

"As I tried to get out of the plane in a hurry, fearing possible explosions, a lady pulled my foot. I was dark but I knew a lady was there. I pulled her arms and got out by clearing away the leaves around. I was worried the plane might explode."

Mr Hong told the Korea Broadcasting System that he

returned to the wreckage to shout for more survivors. "Children shouted for help," he said. "I asked them 'how many?' and they said 'four'."

But with the remains of the fuselage on fire, he was unable to help.

A six-year old girl elsewhere in the plane was more fortunate, pounding on the inside of a window to attract rescuers' attention.

Her mother, sitting beside her, had suffered a crushed pelvis and did not survive, Mike Lanser, one of the first

doctors on the scene, said at a press conference. The girl was rescued unhurt.

Several badly-burned survivors were being prepared at Guam's civilian and naval hospitals for air evacuation to specialist burns units in America.

"There was a rumble," said Rudy DeLos-Santos, a radio reporter living nearby. "My whole apartment started to vibrate. It seemed like an earthquake."

Looking out of his window, Mr DeLos-Santos said he saw

the silhouette of an airliner. "It came down and the belly skimmed the trees, and then a big ball of red-orange fire erupted under the plane. It just dove into the ground and skidded for maybe a minute through the jungle," Mr DeLos-Santos added.

Burning bodies were thrown clear of the wreckage into deep mud and saw grass up to 15 ft high, through which military rescue teams struggled for up to four hours from the nearest road.

Captain David Wheeler, administrator of Guam's US Naval hospital, received 19 casualties within hours of the crash as emergency procedures last rehearsed in April went into action. "The only thing I have seen like this was in Vietnam," he said.

Aviation experts speculated yesterday that because a Boeing 747 had been substituted on the ill-fated flight for the Airbus normally used on that route by Korean Air, its flight crew may have been inexperienced in the approach to Guam's airport.

When we got there the wreckage was burning," he told NBC. "It was 2 am. The flame was melting the fuselage and I knew the people in the mid-section were not going to make it."

At first, the Governor said, he did not believe that there would be any survivors. "Then we heard screams of people crying for attention."

The Governor and some of his staff scrambled "down a 45-degree slope" and through thick jungle to a section of wreckage from the front of the plane. There he rescued five people, including a New Zealand helicopter mechanic who was able to walk from his seat in row 19, said Ginger Cruz, his spokeswoman. Among the others were an injured flight attendant and an 11-year-old Japanese girl, Rika Matsuda. But he was unable to help the girl's mother. "She was dead in the flames," Mr Guiterrez said.



A young survivor is pulled from the wreckage of the Korean Air jet by rescue workers on the island of Guam

Disaster flight was hit by stormy weather and technical problems

By HARVEY ELIOTT
AIR CORRESPONDENT

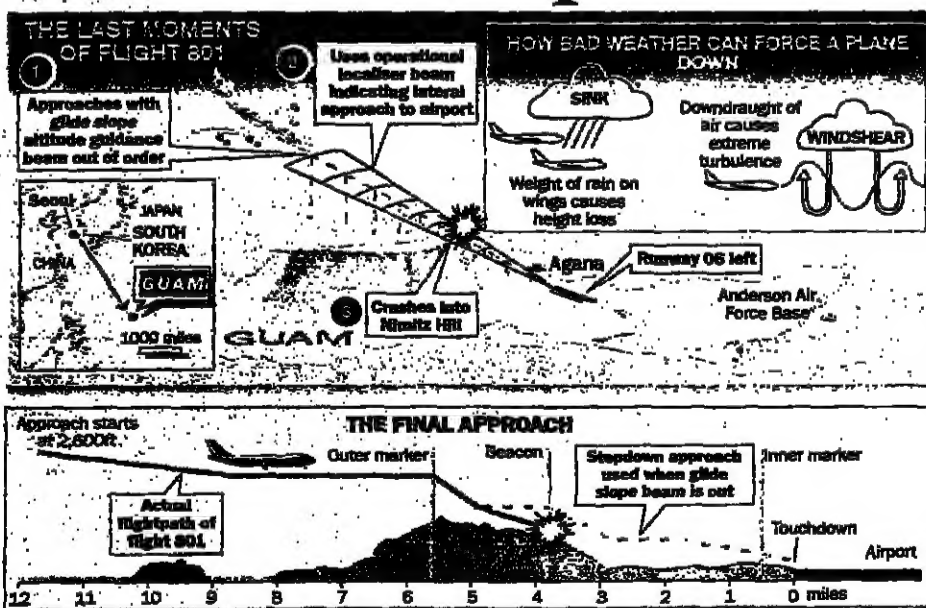
A COMPLEX combination of bad weather, equipment failure and pilot error almost certainly caused the crash of the Korean Air Boeing 747.

Guam's weather is normally good, with slight winds and visibility well in excess of five miles. But pilots are told that on about six days each month between July and September there can be "a marked increase in thunderstorm activity" with heavy rainfall. It was during just such a storm that Flight 801 made its doomed approach to Agaña airport.

The pilot began his descent from the southwest towards runway 06 Left, the only one used regularly because of subsidence on the adjoining 06 Right. He knew from official notices that the equipment that should keep the aircraft at the right height and on the correct glide slope towards the airport was switched off for maintenance. That was not unusual and on official charts pilots are told the minimum visibility they must have to land when the equipment is out of order. For a big aircraft like the Boeing 747-300, which had been delivered to Korean Air by Boeing in December 1984 and had completed 8,433 landings, the minimum was a mile.

With the glide slope equipment out of order, pilots have to follow a chart showing how to descend using a "step landing". But most airlines ban any attempt at landing at night when the glide slope beam is not working, however good the visibility.

The pilot could have diverted to the neighbouring well equipped USAF Andersen base or down on towards the



island of Saipan. But he chose to land as scheduled.

As he flew over the coast at about 3,000ft, the aircraft was engulfed in torrential rain.

In such extreme tropical conditions aircraft can be hit by a phenomenon known as wind shear, a powerful downdraft of air that has a similar effect as water pouring from a tap then bouncing back up from the ground. In a split second the aircraft is first thrust upwards, then faces a strong nose wind. Then a huge downward force slams it towards the ground, followed, if it survives, by a tail blast.

The weight of the rain itself can also force aircraft below the proper altitude. The wings of a Boeing 747 are so huge that in extreme conditions the weight of rainwater is sufficient to push it downwards.

It is not yet known if one, or even both, of these meteorological conditions contributed

to the crash. But what is known is that the aircraft was about 600ft lower than it should have been three miles from touchdown.

The peak to the southwest of Guam rises 1,900ft above the runway, but is slightly offset from the centreline. Official charts say that at that stage of the approach the aircraft must be at a minimum height of 1,600ft—about 500ft above the highest peak, which should be on the aircraft's right.

The pilot of Flight 801, however, had veered slightly off course so that he was a few hundred yards to the right of the centreline of the runway. Investigators want to establish whether he was pushed out of alignment by the weather, why he carried on towards a landing in such conditions with vital equipment out of order and if he knew exactly where he was. As the jet flew over a marker

four miles from the runway the pilot would have heard a beep indicating that he was now on the final descent. Seconds later — 1.6 miles nearer the airport — he would have received a visual warning that he had passed over the main beacon.

At that point he was able to descend below 1,184ft and make the final approach to the runway. Did he begin the descent a mile too soon? The plane's distance-measuring equipment should have plotted its position in relation to the runway, his co-pilot should have been reading the charts and calling out the minimum height that he should have been maintaining. The landing gear was down and the landing lights were on.

They would have been on the ground within two minutes. Instead they hit the hillside at about 160mph.

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Lloyds Bank

Kohl's economy hopes dashed by jobs figures

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

UNEMPLOYMENT in Germany remained at stubbornly high levels last month, dashing Helmut Kohl's hopes of a rapid turnaround in the job market and underlining the country's problems in containing the public sector deficit.

Added to political stalemate on tax and other reforms, an eight-year record low of the mark against the dollar and signs that the east German economy is not recovering quickly enough, yesterday's jobless figures highlighted the difficulties of the Chancellor as he struggles to meet European economic and monetary union targets.

Pressure is increasing on the Bundesbank to raise interest rates: analysts say that a rate of DM 1.90 to the dollar is the critical moment and the rate reached DM 1.88 this week. Pressure is also increasing on the Government to show that the flickering signs of economic recovery, largely led by exporters, will translate into more jobs.

The Federal Labour Office

said yesterday that 131,800 more Germans were unemployed last month than in June, and 442,600 more than in July last year. The unemployment rate last month was 11.4 per cent compared with 10.2 per cent last year.

The authorities blamed the rise largely on early summer holidays and pre-holiday layoffs: the seasonally adjusted figure was closer to 17,000 job losses. But the adjusted figure understates the real structural problems: unemployment is continuing to rise quickly in eastern Germany, while in the west it is stabilising at a high

level. The total number of unemployed is 4.35 million.

The cost of unemployment in terms of dole payments and loss of tax revenue weighs heavily on the public sector deficit. Even the Finance Ministry's often revised estimates for this year look likely to be excessively optimistic.

Friedrich Merz, one of the Christian Democrats' leading financial experts, said yesterday that it was not necessary to meet precisely the 3 per cent public deficit target for the euro. "The decisive thing is the trend, not getting the arrow in the bull's eye," he said. The

Government, though agreeing with that sentiment, is not making such statements in public. The official line is that the target is 3 per cent and the 3 per cent target will be achieved.

In the rush to qualify for the euro, the Government has not been concentrating on the fundamental problem: the deep and continuing inefficiency of the east German economy.

This was demonstrated again yesterday in a report compiled by three of Germany's leading economic institutes. East German companies have failed to secure a national or international presence, the economists say, and so are not benefitting from the export-led recovery in the west.

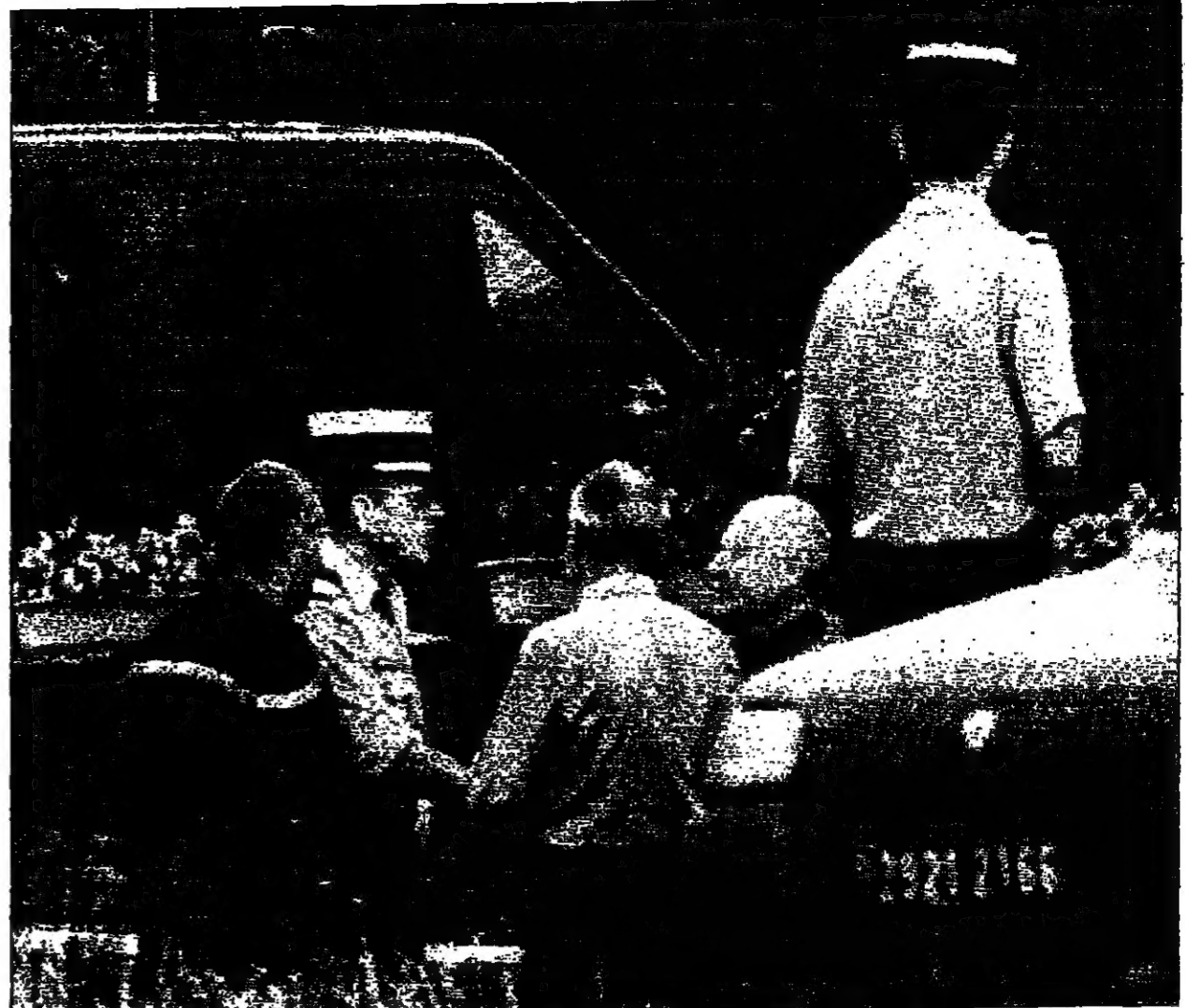
Costs in the east are still too high, services are under-developed and most companies are too small. Most east German companies, the report says, do business within east Germany and not beyond.

Leading article, page 15

Spaniards come off dole

Madrid: Unemployment in Spain dipped below 13 per cent of the working population in July for the first time since 1981, the Labour Ministry announced.

The country officially had 2,009,232 out of work at the end of the month, when the number of new jobs hit a record high of 908,177. However, the National Institute of Statistics said the jobless rate during the second quarter of 1997 was 20.94 per cent of the active population, down from 21.49 per cent during the first quarter. The number out of work between April and June was 3,364,900. (AFP)



Police conduct inquiries in Saint-Didier yesterday after a gunman killed five people, including two policemen

Five shot dead in Brittany by spurned lover

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

A WEALTHY French businessman went on a murderous rampage in a village of northwest France, killing five people including two policemen and the family of his estranged girlfriend, in what police describe as a crime passionnel.

At around 6.30pm on Tuesday, Joseph Allain, 55, left his chateau in Saint-Didier, ten miles from Rennes in Brittany, and stormed into the nearby family home of his former lover, schoolteacher Solange Briet.

M Allain, proprietor of a fuel distribution company in nearby Chateaugiron, opened fire with a shotgun as the family sat at the dinner table, according to police, killing Mme Briet's parents and her handicapped younger brother. Mme Briet, 36, was seriously wounded, but managed to flee to a neighbour's house.

Two paramilitary gendarmes arrived minutes later to find M Allain, apparently unarmed and prepared to surrender, standing on the lawn of the house. He raised his arms and said "I'm coming with you," according to a police statement. As they approached, however, he seized his gun from a bush where it was hidden.

The two policemen, aged 31 and 33, were killed before they could draw their revolvers. A third gendarme, who had gone to tend to the injured woman house, heard the shots and ran out.

M Allain, having used up his ammunition, drew a knife and lunged at him. The two men struggled before the officer managed to shoot and disable his assailant.

The killer and Mme Briet were in hospital yesterday. Both were described as in a stable condition.

Police say M Allain appears to have opened fire after a violent argument with Mme Briet's parents. The older man had been smitten with the teacher for only a few weeks, according to news reports, but neighbours said that the relationship had deteriorated recently.

The businessman is believed to have been going through divorce proceedings.

Bodies reveal site of Pericles's speech

FROM JOHN CARR IN ATHENS

ARCHAEOLOGISTS in Athens have found what they believe are the remains of Athenian soldiers who died fighting Sparta in the opening years of the 5th Century BC Peloponnesian War, and during whose funeral Pericles could have delivered his famous speech praising Athens as "the school of Greece".

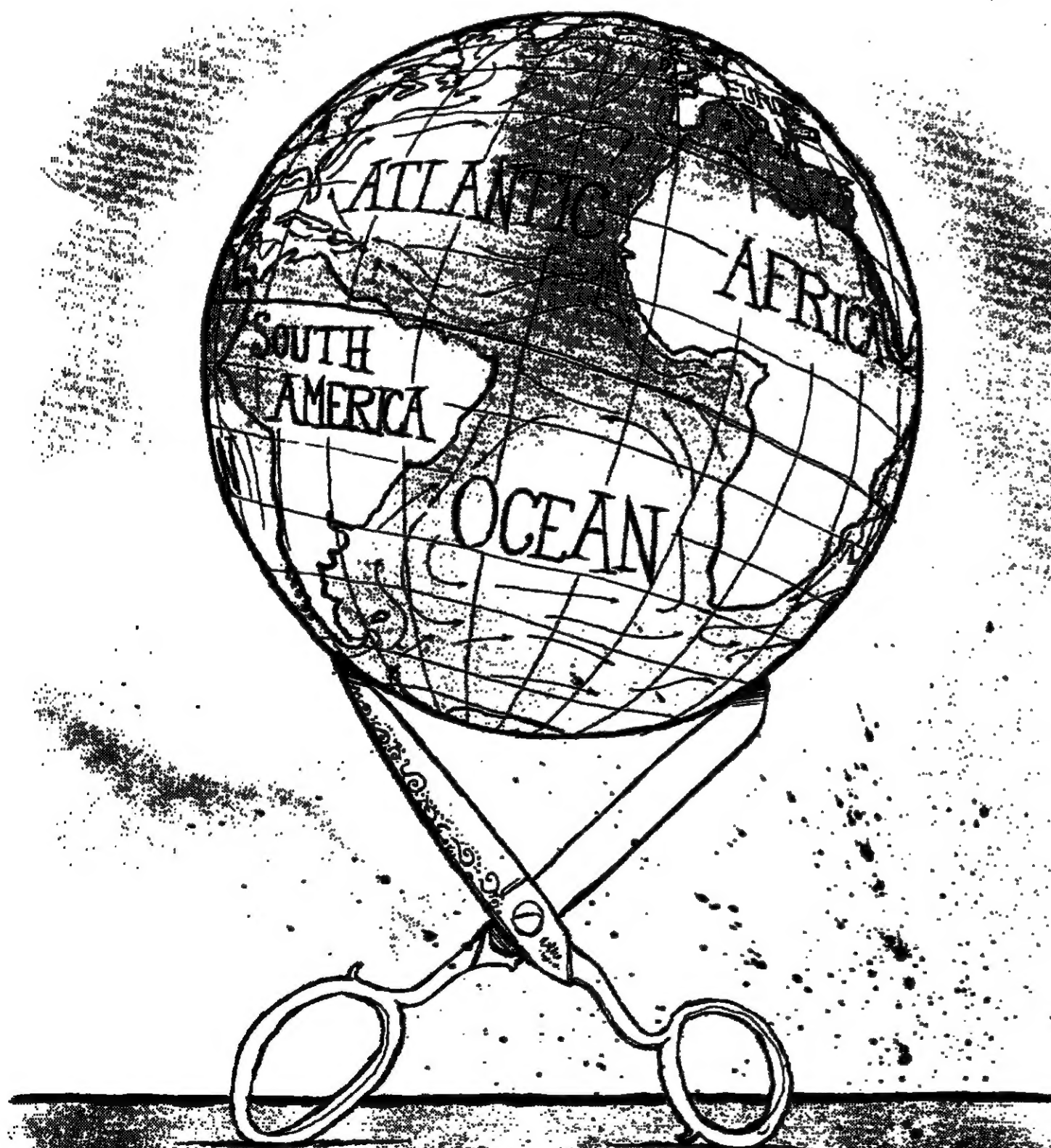
The charred bones from the mass graves in Salaminoi Street, less than a mile from the Acropolis, have been identified as those of young men. The site corresponds almost exactly to the Demosion Sema, the main road out of Athens. Historians mention a spot on the road reserved for soldiers. Pericles delivered his funeral oration there in 430BC for those killed in the



Pericles: said Athens was 'school of Greece'

first year of the 27-year war. "We cannot know whether the soldiers were interred on the day of the oration, but they are from that period," said Yannis Tzedakios, the archaeologist leading the excavation.

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BEAN BAGS AND BEAN CHAIRS

CIRCUS, ROBERTO ROLLO AND JUNGLE

Despite rigorous quality management procedures, Goldsmith Crewe have become aware of a safety fault with stock of the above product.

As a precaution, any customers who have purchased one of these items, are asked to return it to the store where purchased for a full refund.

No other products are affected.

We apologise for any inconvenience.

Indemnity cover to be sold direct by pioneer

By JON ASHWORTH

ACCOUNTANTS and other professionals could save 20 per cent or more on professional indemnity cover with the launch of PI Direct, a direct sales insurer, in the City of London.

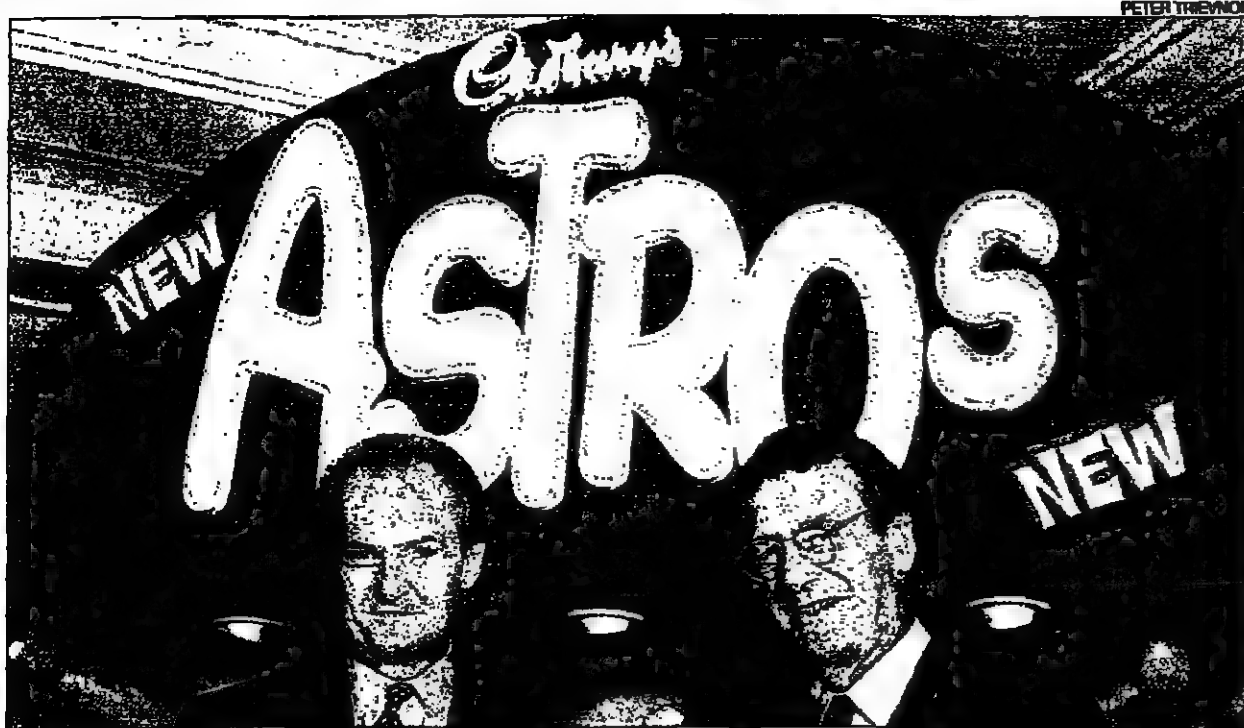
The company, founded by Michael Wood, 36, an insurance lawyer, is billed as the first dedicated professional indemnity underwriter in the UK to offer cover on a direct basis. Its target is firms of accountants, surveyors, engineers, architects and insurance brokers of one to nine partners.

Mr Wood is chief executive of PI Direct, which will offer quotations from today, and goes "live" on September 1. Jennifer Morrison, marketing director, has 18 years' experience as a professional indemnity broker. David Harvey is underwriter, and Robert Huxter, lately with MGI Insurance, is finance director.

The company is a joint venture between the management, Benfield & Rea Investment Trust, the insurance vehicle associated with the late Matthew Harding, and SVB, a Lloyd's management agency. Mr Wood said: "Our new approach to the way that professional indemnity insurance is provided and serviced will enable us to provide a better deal to a very specific section of the market. We're trying to make it easy and simple, and reduce the burden on the small professional firm."

Insurance brokers will be given quotations net of brokerage, leaving them free to negotiate a fee for their services with their clients.

City Diary, page 25



John Sunderland, left, with Sir Dominic Cadbury, chairman, promises two or three confectionery acquisitions

Ulster regulator ignores MMC pricing proposals

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

NORTHERN Ireland's energy regulator is set to face a judicial review after creating a precedent by ignoring a recommendation of a Monopolies and Mergers Commission report on price cuts.

Douglas McIlkoon, the electricity and gas watchdog, yesterday pushed aside the MMC recommendation for

pricing controls on Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) and imposed a 'tougher' regime. The company, which has been in dispute with the regulator for some months, said that it was considering legal action.

It is the first time that a regulator has ignored the recommendations of the MMC, which is generally regarded as the final arbiter in disputes between regulated companies and their watchdogs. Mr

McIlkoon signalled such defiance a few months ago when the MMC delivered its verdict. But yesterday's proposals for licence amendments make clear his decision to impose his own controls.

At stake is about £40 million in revenues to NIE over the life of the price control that ends in 2002.

The regulator intends to impose a one-off price cut of 29 per cent followed by 2 per cent

each year. The MMC called for a cut of 25 per cent and 2 per cent thereafter.

The pricing review, which will be backdated to April this year, had gone to the MMC after the regulator and NIE clashed. NIE had suggested a one-off cut of 22 per cent, whereas the regulator had wanted 31 per cent.

Shares in NIE fell 12½p to 427½p on the decision and the uncertainty over legal action

by the company. NIE said yesterday it would make a decision soon.

Mr McIlkoon's office said it believed that it could defend its actions in court. Charles Coughlan, deputy director-general of the Northern Ireland electricity and gas supply, said: "Our legal advice is that we are all right on this one."

He denied that the decision made a mockery of going to the MMC. "The President of the Board of Trade has chosen to ignore MMC findings," he said. He added that there was no room for further negotiation between the two sides.

Mr McIlkoon's dismissal of the MMC's recommendation surprised many in the industry who viewed it as a maverick action. However, if he succeeds his action will create an important regulatory precedent. Theoretically, regulators are not obliged to bow to MMC recommendations, but by convention they do.

Pound bites into profit at Cadbury

THE strength of sterling restricted Cadbury Schweppes, the confectionery and soft drinks group, to a 2 per cent rise in interim profits and could wipe £40 million from the full-year figure (Dominic Walsh writes).

Half-year profits before tax and disposal gains were up from £231 million to £236 million on turnover 18 per cent lower, at £1.9 billion.

John Sunderland, chief executive, said he expected to make two or three confectionery acquisitions in the next year, for between £100 million and £200 million each.

An interim dividend of 5.5p (5.2p) will be paid as a foreign income dividend on November 21. The shares rose 16p to 611½p. *Tempus*, page 24

Microsoft links with Apple in Net deal

APPLE COMPUTER and Microsoft have linked up in a deal announced yesterday. Microsoft will buy about £100 million worth of non-voting shares in Apple, and the Microsoft Internet Explorer web browser will become the default program used for connecting Macintosh computers to the Internet. The deal was announced by Steve Jobs, Apple's co-founder, at the MacWorld conference in Boston. Other radical changes will mean that future Microsoft products will be created especially for the Macintosh — the most notable being *Microsoft Office 98*.

Many Apple devotees hoped that Mr Jobs would take on the currently vacant role of chief executive for Apple, but they were disappointed. He will have a seat on the new board of directors along with Larry Ellison, chief executive of Oracle. Mr Jobs also told the MacWorld conference that three board members, including A. C. Mike Markkula, an early financier and one-time chairman, had resigned.

Meltek suspended

SHARES in Meltek were suspended on AIM yesterday at 40p ahead of an announcement that the company had asked bankers to send in receivers to its Web Corp, believing it is "no longer commercially viable". Webb was acquired by Meltek in December. Meltek said that its other divisions are trading profitably at the operating level. A detailed announcement will be made as soon as practicable, the company added. At the suspension price Meltek was worth £2.8 million.

Adidas sales rise 40%

ADIDAS, the German sportswear maker, said it expected continuing strong performance in the second half of 1997 after net sales rose 40 per cent to DM3.14 billion (£1.04bn) in the first half. "We see no reason that the second part of 1997 will not be a reflection of the first part," Robert Louis-Dreyfus, chief executive, said. Adidas said it expected gross profit margins to remain at about 40 per cent of net sales in the second half of the year.

Zetters looks to football

ZETTERS, the pools and bingo group, reported a pre-tax profit up from £1.1 million to £2.4 million in the year to March 31 on sales down from £9.7 million to £16.2 million. Earnings per share rose from 10.1p to 24.8p, although the total dividend for the year remains unchanged at 10p a share. Zetters said the decline in pools turnover year-on-year has reduced significantly since April 1 and that it expects the decline to bottom out soon with the start of the football season.

Select interim rises

SHARES in Select Appointments rose from 513½p to 525p on a rise in pre-tax profits from £7.7 million to £13.3 million for the first half. Earnings per share rose 40 per cent to 9.5p a share in the six months to June 30 and the interim dividend rises 20 per cent to 1.2p. Tony Martin, the chairman, said: "The outlook for the staffing services industry remains very favourable as markets increasingly accept flexible working patterns and deregulation continues."

Lomond beats average

LOMOND Underwriting, one of the minnows of the Lloyd's of London corporate sector, yesterday reported a maiden return of 12.61 per cent on underwriting capacity in 1994, the latest year of account under Lloyd's three-year accounting rule, before agent fees and a special levy to the society. This compares with a market average of 11.02 per cent. Lomond recommended a dividend of 10p for the year, payable on September 19.

Heywood buyback

HEYWOOD WILLIAMS, the building and car components maker, yesterday announced plans to buy back up to 10 per cent of its shares in the next few weeks. The news sent the shares up from 195½p to 206½p. A spokesman said: "We have a particularly strong balance sheet, but a particularly weak share price. Interim pre-tax profits before exceptional items rose by £7 million, to £21.8 million. The interim dividend remains 5p. Undiluted earnings per share rose from 9.3p to 15.2p."

Transport setback

PRE-TAX profits at Transport Development fell from £15.8 million to £15.1 million in the half year to June 30 because of "disappointing" conditions in the hire sector, the company said. Earnings per share increased to 7.23p from 7.42p and the interim dividend was maintained at 4p. Martin Llowarch, chairman, said: "We indicated that 1996 had been a difficult and disappointing year for vehicle rental and this has continued into 1997."

Metal Bulletin cheaper

SHARES in Metal Bulletin, the publisher, fell 72½p to 950p as City analysts cut full-year profit forecasts from £5 million after disappointment over half-year results. Trevor Turing, chairman, said that earnings growth may be slowed by sterling's strength. The company reported first-half pre-tax profits of £2.15 million, up from £2.04 million, in line with market expectations. Analysts, who cut forecasts, noted that 76 per cent of revenue is non-sterling. The half-year dividend is 6.7p (5.8p).

Delyn spurns Newport

SHARES in Delyn rose 1p to 99½p after the AIM-listed company rejected a £9.6 million takeover bid from Newport Holdings, the property group. Delyn said that it sees the bid, made on Monday, as "most unwelcome" and urged shareholders to take no action. Newport bid at 110p a share, offering four new Newport shares for every three Delyn ordinary shares. Delyn said that Newport's share price had performed poorly since its 1994 flotation.

Hilton lifts offer for ITT to £8.3bn

By DOMINIC WALSH

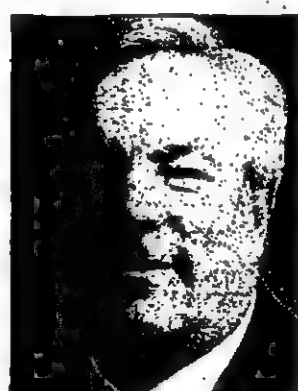
HILTON HOTELS, the US hotel and gaming group, yesterday fired the latest salvo in its increasingly acrimonious battle for control of ITT Corporation, owner of the Sheraton Hotels brand.

Stephen Bollenbach, chief executive of Hilton, announced he was raising the \$6.5 billion (£4 billion) bid launched in January to \$8.3 billion. The \$70-a-share offer represents a 64 per cent premium to ITT's share price before the original bid. Including debt, the new offer is worth \$11.5 billion.

Yesterday's bid comes just three days after ITT announced it was selling a 50 per cent stake in Las Vegas's Desert Inn for \$150 million.

In a bid to fend off Mr Bollenbach, ITT also announced plans last month to split the company into three and buy back stock.

Hilton in the US struck a deal last year with Ladbroke, the owners of the Hilton brand worldwide, to bring the two parts of Hilton together.



Bollenbach: bid battle

Bid mark neared as JCI lifts Lonrho stake

By JASON NISSE

JCI, the South African mining group, has raised its stake in Lonrho to 32 per cent. JCI also has an option over a 26.7 per cent holding controlled by Anglo American, the South African conglomerate, which JCI intends to exercise in December.

This would take its holding in Lonrho to 29.9 per cent, the maximum it can buy without making a bid. Merger talks between JCI and Lonrho which would have created a £2 billion group were called off

earlier this summer. Analysts believe the talks fell down over the valuation of Lonrho's 33 per cent stake in Ashanti, the Ghanaian mining group, through JCI's share price also collapsed while talks were ongoing.

Anglo American is only allowed to vote on 10 per cent of its stake in Lonrho, having had its voting rights restricted by the European Commission which was concerned about its control of the platinum market.

Former Tory minister to resign as director

GEC clear-out continues

By OLIVER AUGUST

GEORGE SIMPSON, the GEC managing director, yesterday stepped up the clear-out of personnel assembled by his predecessor, Lord Weinstock. Sir Richard Needham, the former Tory minister, will resign from his role as executive marketing director at the industrial group later this month.

Sir Richard said in a GEC statement that he wants to "develop further the contacts made during his years both as a Northern Ireland minister for the economy and then as minister of trade". He has

been made European vice-chairman of NEC, the Japanese electronics group. The former minister, who left the Government and joined GEC in 1995, was effectively sidelined by the corporate restructuring undertaken by Mr Simpson since the beginning of the year.


Mr Simpson said: "Richard has played a thoroughly supportive role throughout. We shall miss his enthusiasm and directness." Sir Richard's departure will be followed by the departure of Lord Prior,

another ex-Tory minister who had been made chairman by Lord Weinstock. On Tuesday, John Mayo of Zeneca was appointed as the successor to David Newlands, Lord Weinstock's finance director.

Sir Richard, MP for Wiltshire North until standing down at the last election, is a non-executive director of Dyson Appliances, the vacuum cleaner business. As a trade minister for Northern Ireland, he also helped to set up Macbie, the troubled Belfast-based textile equipment company.



| Australia \$ | Bank | Bank |
|-----------------|--------|--------|
| Austria Sch | Boys | Sells |
| Belgium Fr | 22.10 | 20.10 |
| Canada C | 65.07 | 60.11 |
| Cyprus Cyp | 0.922 | 0.851 |
| Denmark Kr | 72.01 | 11.12 |
| France F | 1.77 | 8.74 |
| Germany Dm | 10.58 | 5.97 |
| Hong Kong \$ | 3.16 | 2.92 |
| India Rs | 2.25 | 2.42 |
| Italy Lira | 13.17 | 11.37 |
| Japan Yen | 107 | 107 |
| Netherlands Gld | 1.97 | 1.08 |
| New Zealand \$ | 0.597 | 0.597 |
| Norway Kr | 8.97 | 8.97 |
| Portugal Esc | 3.98 | 3.271 |
| Spain Ptas | 166.37 | 166.37 |
| Sweden Kr | 24.76 | 24.76 |
| Switzerland Fr | 2.20 | 2.20 |
| Taiwan Nts | 27.125 | 25.147 |
| USA \$ | 1.00 | 1.00 |



COMMERCIAL UNION

RESULTS - 6 MONTHS 1997

Strong first half performance

- Pre-tax operating profit of £235m (1996 £216m)
- Strong growth at constant rates of exchange:
 - operating profit +25%
 - life profits +24%
 - new life and savings business +21%
- Interim dividend increased by 7%

John Carter, Chief Executive, commenting on the results said:

"Further expansion of our worldwide life and savings business and a strong underlying increase in life profits, contributed to a good first half for the Group, with pre-tax profits 25% higher at constant rates of exchange."

| | 6 months 1997 unaudited | 6 months 1996 unaudited At 30.6.97 exchange rates | At 30.6.96 exchange rates |
|--|-------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Total premium income | £4,274m | £4,041m | £4,569m |
| Operating profit before tax | £235m | £188m | £216m |
| Profit on ordinary activities before tax | (ii) £235m | £226m | (ii) £265m |
| Profit attributable to equity shareholders | £217m | £134m | £159m |
| Operating earnings per ordinary share | 21.5p | 17.2p | 20.0p |
| Interim dividend per ordinary share | (iii) 12.25p | - | 11.45p |
| Shareholders' funds | £4,131m | - | (iii) £3,902m |

Note: (i) Includes realised investment gains before tax of £714m (1996 £64m).

(ii) The 1997 interim dividend will be paid in the form of a foreign income dividend in cash with no scrip alternative.

(iii) At 31 December 1996.

The 1997 interim report will be circulated to shareholders on 29 August 1997 and copies can be requested from the Shareholder Relations Service at the address below or by telephoning 0171 662 8866.

Commercial Union plc, St. Helen's, 1 Undershaft, London, EC3P 3DQ
Tel: 0171 283 7500 Internet: <http://www.commercial-union.co.uk/cu>

Well that's death with the sighs of relief were resounding as, with a £450 million provision, Sir Peter Davis endeavoured to put an end to Prudential's damaging involvement in the pension mis-selling scandal.

The decision to guarantee pensioners the equivalent of what they would have received had they not succumbed to the blandishments of the Pru sales team is the right one. Legal & General thought of this remedy first and it was only the regulator's lack of enthusiasm, which prevented it being put into effect sooner. Now both L&G and the Pru have been given the go-ahead to promise their pension holders that they will not be short changed and a further ten companies are hoping to be allowed to deal with the problem the same way.

The feisty Helen Liddell has undoubtedly helped persuade the mis-sellers that they had better change their attitude on this issue. She was horrified by the lack of "mea culpa" which echoed from the pension companies. Indeed, she indicated that such companies might not be worthy of a role in providing the new stateholder pension which is a crucial part of the Government's plans. How wise then, of Sir Peter, to decide to stop arguing about whether or not the Pru is guilty

Sir Peter takes Prudential way out

and simply to promise to pay up without a fight.

As yesterday's figures from the group made clear, it can afford to be magnanimous, with half-year operating profits close to £400 million.

But the company should not now feel that it can sit back and wait for claimants to come knocking. Mrs Liddell will not relax her stance that the onus is on those who mis-sold to seek out those they misled and right the wrong. And that would be a somewhat futile exercise if, simultaneously, salesmen continued to mis-sell to a whole raft of new customers. The STB was far from impressed with what it found on a recent visit to the Pru, with the result that salesmen are having to be expensively retrained. Sir Peter believes the effect this is having on sales, but potential customers are likely to see things rather differently.

The Pru's first priority must be to restore an image that has been badly tarnished. Shareholders must have been relieved by Sir Peter's assurance that he is not about to buy a bank, despite the

situation with NatWest, although he still believes his organisation would benefit from an increased high street presence. There seems little reason why customers should pop into a branch to see the Man from the Pru if they are wary of inviting him over their own threshold because of his over-enthusiasm for clinching a sale.

Boots plays its card right

While the man from the Boots has stumbled in the public's perception, Boots The Chemist has hardly put a foot wrong. Its parent company may have walked apparently blindfold into buying a ropey collection of businesses that Philip Birch had wittily assembled under the Ward

COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

White name, but that expensive diversion was not allowed to divert Boots The Chemist from its determined progress.

With the number of customers passing through its doors second only to the number who visit the Post Office, BTC concentrated on the sensible strategy of persuading them to buy more. The pharmacies with which Jesse Boot began remain at the core of the business but it can now claim to be the country's biggest seller of sandwiches and has fulfilled the admirable role of making life a little more difficult for Anita Roddick by effectively producing a copy-cat range of foot potions and the like.

Seeing no indignity in imitation, Boots is now following the trend towards loyalty cards, and offering customers a sizeable 4p in the pound incentive to sign up. On its calculations, the card will gen-

erate a 4 per cent rise in sales and break-even within 18 months.

Initially, it is merely another marketing ploy. Longer term, however, the Boots card has the potential to be a ground breaker in creating the modern version of the company store, which once fulfilled all the needs of the workers. Looking ahead, the company envisages that its clever card, equipped with chip, could be programmed with details of everything from health insurance and medical data to social services information.

It is only a short step from there to envisage BTC cemented into a crucial role in the whole health and social services structure, perhaps linked into doctors' surgeries and hospitals. The vague term may have changed from privatisation to public/private partnership, but, whatever it is called, the potential

for Boots could be huge. With almost any other company, the public might balk at the idea of a commercial operator getting hold of such sensitive data. The legacy of Jesse Boot might just enable BTC to take on this new, community, role.

Higher rates: the counter argument

Stuart Hampson has learned to be guarded when he bumps into former colleagues from the Treasury. Asked if business is going well, he risks terrible retribution should he reply that indeed it is. For Hampson is now the chairman of the John Lewis Partnership, and he has found a depressing attitude at the Treasury which believes that if retailers are having a good time, then the economy is in peril.

Hampson and his fellow shopkeepers argue, although rather too sotto voce for it to have much effect, that this simplistic view is certainly no longer accurate, even if it once was. Growth in retail sales need not

be an inevitable precursor of soaring inflation, the sole dragon on which the Treasury, both civil servants and politicians, appear determined to concentrate their slaying power. Despite the headline figures on retail sales growth, the picture on the high street is very mixed. The country is over-supplied with shops and competition for business is ensuring that prices are not running rampantly ahead. Much to the chagrin of store companies, customers, even those with windfalls to blow, remain highly price conscious.

This is a factor the Bank of England's monetary policy committee should be bearing in mind as it toys with whether to push up interest rates today. They should fulfil the markets' expectations, and lay off.

Hard cheese

LORD YOUNG of Graffham, currently building his own corporate finance boutique, knows about the difficulties Lord Simon of Highbury faced on moving into politics. To paraphrase his article (see page 25), it is very hard to move from being the grand fronsage of a major corporation to a role that brings many masters. At its core, the affair was about the former BP boss thinking he could continue running things his way. He couldn't.

Currency deals in Asian markets lift Standard bank

By ROBERT MILLER, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

STANDARD CHARTERED, the international banking group, made more than £30 million dealing in the volatile Asian currency markets, helping to lift trading profits by 8 per cent, to £434 million, in its first half.

Malcolm Williamson, chairman of Standard Chartered, which lifted its interim dividend by 24 per cent, to 5.25p, payable on October 17, said that the bank had done well out of currency volatility in the Far East because its regional offices are staffed by local experts and not expatriates. Dealing profits jumped to £134 million in the six months to June 30, from £101 million in the same period last year. The share price rose 32p to £10.38.

The strength of sterling against key currencies in the areas in which Standard operates, notably Indonesia, Pakistan and Ghana, held headline pre-tax profits at £435 million, against £448 million in the same period last year.

Standard Chartered, which is to invest around £90 million

back into the business this year, said that earnings per share fell to 28.9p, from 30.5p previously.

As part of a credit-risk strategy, Mr Williamson said that some 300 of the poorer-performing corporate client portfolios had been closed, in addition to the 550 shut down last year. Bad-debt and doubtful-debt provision remained at £44 million.

Standard Chartered's Hong Kong business benefi-



Williamson: shut portfolios

ed from a 23 per cent rise in the value of its mortgage book, to £3.4 billion, and Mr Williamson said that the outlook for the former British colony now handed back to the Chinese authorities was very positive.

In the autumn, an officially-backed body called the Mortgage Corporation will encourage developers in Hong Kong to release land from their portfolios to raise the number of new housing units built each year from 35,000 to 90,000. To counter the concern about over-exposure to land by the banks, the new corporation will act as a broker to sell on excess home loans to third parties.

Mr Williamson said that new business developments in the past six months included the opening of a new dealing room in Shanghai, the launch of a new credit card in Zimbabwe and the Philippines and improved branch and telephone banking services in Cameroon, Ghana, Botswana, Malaysia, India and Thailand.

Sterling strength clips CU progress

By GAVIN LINDSAY

COMMERCIAL UNION, the composite insurer, increased pre-tax profits 8.5 per cent, to £235 million, in the first half of the year, with growth in both its life and general businesses.

The strong pound cut the headline figure by £40 million, CU said. Profits would have been 25 per cent up on the year had it not been for exchange rates, the company added.

Without the currency effect, profits from its life and savings business rose 24 per cent, to £125 million, on £19 billion premiums. The success of its Premier Investment Bond lifted single premium sales in the UK to £265 million. The Netherlands, Italy and Poland all saw substantial increases in new business.

The company was less suc-

cessful in general insurance, in which pre-tax profits rose just 7 per cent. Premium income in the UK fell 3 per cent in the face of fierce competition and 18 million of sub-sistence claims. However, Peter Foster, finance director, said that premiums had now levelled and would start to rise.

John Carter, chief executive, said the group was well positioned for the future. "Our exposure to fast-developing life and savings markets, particularly in Europe, is generating substantial growth, which will be of increasing value to our shareholders," he said.

Earnings per share rose 1.5p to 21.5p. The interim dividend rises 7 per cent, to 12.25p, to be paid as a foreign income dividend on November 17.

Chrysalis buys radio station for £17.6m

By FRASER NELSON

CHRYSLIS, the music to basketball company that owns the London and Manchester Heart radio stations, has added Yorkshire's Kiss FM to its portfolio in a £17.6 million deal, making it the largest radio broadcaster after the BBC.

The sale of Razz FM, a venture capital-backed station that started broadcasting four years ago, will boost its total number of potential listeners to 21 million.

Richard Huntingford, head of the Chrysalis radio division, said the company will now decide whether Kiss is a stronger brand than its own Cardiff-based Galaxy station. Both broadcast dance music, against the "classic hits" formula adopted by Heart.

The loser will be scrapped, and the winner will be rolled out across Britain, with the prospect of being broadcast in the North East of England by next summer.

Kiss is listened to by 9 per cent of its target audience, against Galaxy's 16 per cent.

Mr Huntingford said: "We will now talk to our marketing people and see which of the two is more appropriate."

Chrysalis is currently bidding for three FM licences in Central Scotland, the North West of England and the North East. If successful, it plans to broadcast another Heart in the North West, and roll out either Kiss or Galaxy in the other two areas.

The company is funding the purchase through a £20 million rights issue, which will see founder Chris Wright dilute his 42 per cent holding for the first time.

BZW is offering 3.81 million shares at 52.5p apiece on a seven-for-50 basis. The shares eased 24p to 52.25p.

How GKN is hoping to cash in on carry

By OLIVER AUGUST

GKN, the aerospace to automotive group, is making a bold move into the grocery sector with a new plastic tray for vegetables which it hopes will turn into a £1 billion business in Europe.

Asia, the supermarket chain, has signed up as the first customer and GKN is attempting to create a new world standard for the plastic trays

that will replace traditional cardboard trays. CK Chow, the chief executive, said: "We are very encouraged by the results. The vegetables can stay on the same tray from the field to the shop."

The new trays will be reusable, make food last longer and be environmentally friendly. Supermarket assistants will be able to put the trays straight from the pallet on to the shelf. The group reported pre-tax profits

of £203 million in the first half of the year, up 12 per cent and ahead of forecasts. Without the rise in the pound the increase would have been double that. The interim dividend was raised to 10.5p from 9.6p. Earnings per share rose to 38.9p from 31.7p.

GKN has a cash pile of £248 million, out of which it will have to pay for legal damages to be finalised against Meincke Mufflers, the US subsidiary.

The group generated £218 million in cash in the past six months.

Mr Chow said he was following a "strong growth strategy" which will entail further acquisitions. There would be no big announcements in the next few months, but GKN would play an important part in the "consolidation game" in the aerospace industry.

Tempos, page 24



23% RISE IN UNDERLYING EPS

"Cadbury Schweppes produced turnover of over £1.8 billion from continuing operations in the first half of 1997 and an increase in trading profit of 17%. Underlying earnings per share were up 23% to 14.9p. The direct comparison with our 1996 interim results is impacted by the sale of our 51% interest in Coca-Cola & Schweppes Beverages Ltd (CCSB) in February 1997, the strength of sterling and the absence in this half year of major restructuring costs.

1997 HALF YEAR RESULTS (Unaudited)

| | Half Year 1997 £m | % Change Actual Currency | % Change Constant Currency |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Sales - Ongoing Business | 1,837 | - 3 | + 5 |
| Trading Profit - Ongoing Business | 245 | +17 | +25 |
| Profit before tax & disposal gains | 236 | + 2 | + 9 |
| Profit on disposals | 417 | | |
| Earnings per Share before disposal gains | 14.9p | +23 | +32 |
| Earnings per Share - FRS3 including disposal gains | 47.1p | | |
| Dividend per Share | 5.5p | + 6 | |

We achieved positive results in both our beverage and confectionery business streams. Sales and market shares of both streams benefited from the introduction of new products, the continued international expansion of existing brands and higher levels of marketing investment.

Our 'Managing for Value' initiative was launched to improve shareholder value.

We look forward to the second half of 1997 with confidence."

Freddie Cadbury
Sir Dominic Cadbury, Chairman

Cadbury Schweppes

MANAGEMENT PROVEN IN THE MARKETPLACE

Mall operator puts valuation at £1.75bn

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

CAPITAL Shopping Centres, owner and operator of eight malls including Lakeside in Essex and the MetroCentre in Tyne-side, yesterday confirmed the strength of the retail property market by increasing its revaluation surplus by £135 million. CSC puts its new valuation at £1.75 billion.

CSC, which reported a 31 per cent jump in interim pre-tax profit to £36.3 million, said it would now have its net asset value reassessed twice a year.

Lakeside, which will face a big competitor when the Bluewater shopping centre opens a few miles away in Kent in 1999, produced a revaluation surplus of £59.1 million, while that of MetroCentre was £43.5 million. CSC



Lakeside faces competition

has put back the opening date for its Braehead development near Glasgow from spring 1999 to July of that year.

Tempos, page 24

Sir Ronald Hampel's most telling contribution to corporate governance is likely to be his heartfelt and understandable desire for his committee on it to be the last. Judging by this week's preliminary report, ICI's chairman may feel that the returns on time spent by half-million-a-year folk mulling such matters are diminishing rapidly to zero.

Others might offer different explanations. Tactically, the purpose of such committees has been to absorb controversy and avoid legislation. Tory governments wanted them to show that something was being done to clean up business. In turn, business wanted them to neutralise issues, ranging from high-profile corporate collapses to directors' pay, that might hasten the arrival of a hostile Labour government.

So the Cadbury, Greenbury and Hampel committees, and several others led by people without knighthoods, have addressed issues squarely, knocked down any radical suggestions for changing the status quo, but suggested

Sir Ronald tries to shut Pandora's box



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

limited reforms and good practice to deal with the worst excesses. Their recommendations have in some cases genuinely improved the workings of business though, except for those directly involved, this was an optional extra.

Now the Tories have gone and, perplexingly, new Labour does not seem hostile. This transition was epitomised by Lord Simon of Highbury. As Sir David Simon, BP boss, he was a member of both the Greenbury and Hampel committees. Then he became one of the group who, as the Tories would have it, fraternised with new Labour in opposition. Now he is a minister at both the Treasury and the Department of Trade and Industry. And Lord Simon's views do not seem to have changed, or needed to change, along the way.

Ian McCartney, one-time source of "fat cats" and now corporate affairs minister, may be

just as puzzled and suspicious as the average member of the CBI or the Institute of Directors. Yet any threat of the Government casting aside these reports with snorts of disdain and legislating for two-tier boards, pay controls, people's auditors and "stakeholder" power seem remote. These "Hampel" committees have done their tactical job. They have seen big business through to calmer political waters. Or so it appears.

There is a more fundamental reason to call a halt. When Sir Ronald accepted the poisoned chalice, he did so as a proud industrialist who was keen to defend business against constant mischievous attacks. His preliminary report takes as its theme that there has been far too much attention to accountability and too little to business performance. Maybe so. But the longer you look at it and the deeper you delve, the

clearer it becomes that boards of directors are not really responsible to anyone. That's how they like it. In theory, as all such reports point out, those who run companies are responsible to those who own them, the shareholders. They cannot be beholden formally to anyone else, although it should pay in the long run to have satisfied customers, employees

and creditors, as well as to be in good odour with local communities, green campaigners, the churches *et al.* If society wants to impose other obligations, as it often does, it must use the law. Most investors will agree.

Naturally, those who champion the company as an amoral force for economical efficiency are first to complain if society does legislate. But leave that aside. As Shell and others know, market forces now put over the views of many interest groups with some force.

Responsibility to shareholders is also mainly in the eyes of the director. As the report points out, most shares are controlled by institutions, now usually on behalf of people whose views they do not know. An average of less than 40 per cent of shares are voted at company meetings, a figure little changed after years of cajoling. And private shareholders are in-

creasingly disenfranchised by the nominee system of holding stock.

In any case, the committee argues, it is not necessary for things like boardroom pay to be voted on by shareholders. Their interests are taken care of by non-executive directors who are chosen by their fellow directors. To maintain the board's unity of purpose, these must not represent anyone, even pension funds collectively.

Beyond this, boards have a wonderful legal get-out clause. Duties of directors "are owed to the company, meaning generally the shareholders collectively, both present and future, not the shareholders at a given point in time."

Existing investors, you see, are liable to be be frightfully short-term instead of worthily long-term. That includes fund managers, so the committee urges trustees to tell them to take a long term view. So the politically correct

nostrum that short-term is bad and long-term is good becomes a catch-all excuse to ignore the owners as well.

Thankfully for all of us, British business operates much better in practice than might seem likely in theory. That is perhaps the message Sir Ronald would have liked to deliver. At the level of big corporations, however, this relies mainly on stock market forces and particularly on that epitome of despised short-termism, the hostile bid.

ICI's board, for instance, long rejected suggestions from some of us (and some directors) that it should demerge pharmaceuticals. Then the predatory Lord Hanson took a stake and, having seen him off, ICI soon proposed a demerger.

Anyone who really thinks that corporate governance can muddle along should try to imagine what would happen if the Government reverted to its earlier stance in Opposition and banned takeovers or severely restricted them. Informally, the President of the Board of Trade may be giving them a chance to find out.

Hard look at both sides of the coin as US gambling booms



AMERICAN AGENDA
BRONWEN MADDOX

If Camelot's directors ever find public leashing for them too much to stand, or if, as many assume, the Government refuses to renew the lottery operator's franchise, they should head for America. They will be greeted as heroes.

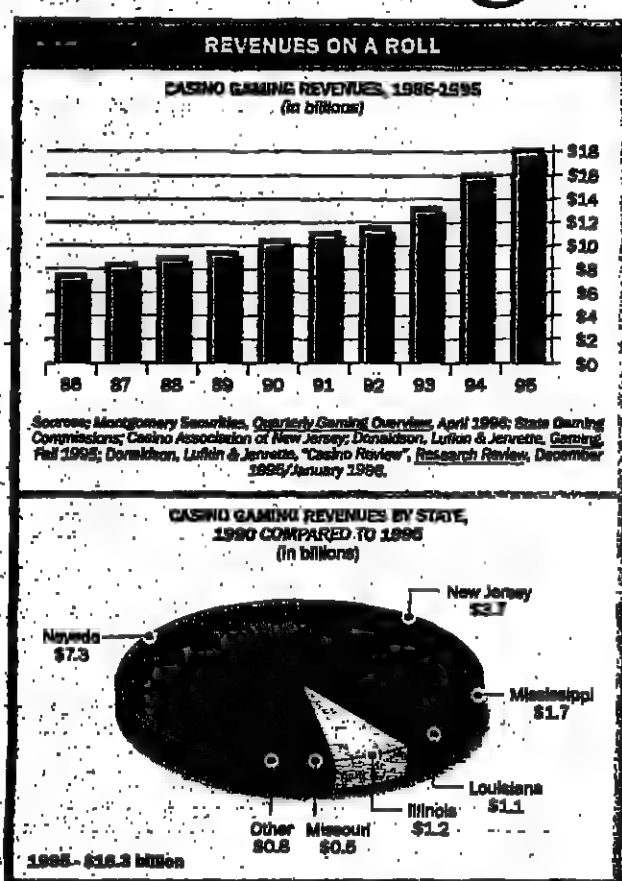
In the gambling boom that has gripped the US, casino and lottery bosses have been popularly credited with the power to lift the poorest communities out of poverty through jobs and investment. Every state but Hawaii and Utah has now embraced "gambling", the spurious-sounding label by which the industry prefers to be known.

In 1995, "players" placed \$550.3 billion (\$339 billion) of bets, an increase of 14 per cent on 1994; industry revenues after prizes were \$44 billion; state gaming taxes on casinos alone were \$2.9 billion.

Until now, the Government in Washington has turned a blind eye to the industry. In 1970, a panel concluded after a six-year study that "the only role of the Federal Government should be to prevent interference by one state with the gambling policies of another".

For years, Indian reserves controlled a large slice of the industry, and politicians were sensitive to the complaint, in the words of one lawyer, "they took away the buffalo and the salmon, and now they want to take away gaming".

But the Clinton Administration has now set up a two-year commission to take a harder look at the industry—and not just because it has noticed that the Federal Government is losing out on potential tax revenue. The murder in May of a seven-year-old girl in a Nevada casino while her father gam-



High stakes: gamblers in America, like James Bond, the superspy, have gone for a bigger slice of the action

bled added to growing fears about the industry's darker side. Some now want to see gambling on aircraft, while embryonic Internet betting will not wait for regulation.

Enough stories about compulsive gambling are now surfacing to grip the American public's imagination, such as the recent case of four Nebraska people who, together, lost \$250,000 over two years. One of them, Gregory Hausner, stayed at the same craps table for 50 straight hours without sleeping or eating, placing \$5 bets until he collapsed into bed from exhaustion. That time, he ended \$25 ahead, but over two years he lost \$35,000. "Craps is my monster", he said.

A government assessment of the social and economic impact of gambling is long overdue. So is a thorough rebuttal of the industry's worst arguments for its existence, which have gained enough credibility to distort tax and social spending, to the cost of the poorest people in the US.

The best argument for gambling is the principle, not



very controversial in the US, that people should have as much freedom to do what they want as possible. The more suspect arguments are that gambling brings wealth to the US, in particular to the poor regions where casinos tend to be located. The industry points out that according

| Estimated state revenue after winnings | | |
|--|--------------|----------------------|
| | 1995 \$ bn | % increase over 1994 |
| Casinos | | |
| Nevada slot machines | 7.09 | 7.4 |
| Nevada table games | 3.86 | 8.1 |
| Riverboats | 4.85 | 42.7 |
| Other casino games | 2.40 | 25.6 |
| State lotteries | 15.24 | 7.9 |
| Horses | 3.07 | 4.5 |
| Greyhounds | 0.61 | -4.2 |
| Charity gambling | 2.48 | 4.3 |
| Indian reservations | 4.00 | 18.2 |
| Other | 0.98 | n/a |
| Total | 44.38 | 11.4 |

Source: American Gaming Association

to a recent study for the American Gaming Association by Arthur Andersen, the consultant, casinos have created 300,000 jobs directly and 400,000 in other industries that supply them.

But so far, the industry has not mounted a convincing rebuttal of the classic argu-

ment that gambling is money that consumers would otherwise spend elsewhere. There is much local evidence that gambling cannibalises small businesses. In the decade after gambling was introduced, Atlantic City lost 40 per cent of its restaurants. Workers in the industry also tend to earn very low wages, and find it hard to progress to better jobs.

A second dubious argument is that state lottery revenue and taxes on casinos pay for local schools and hospitals, a claim that has earned gambling companies widespread public praise and makes many feel good about having a flutter.

The New York state lottery markets itself with the slogan "supporting education since 1967". But regional school boards complain that, in practice, their share of state money has not increased.

Politicians opposed to gambling point out that as poor people spend a larger proportion of their income on gambling, the use of gambling revenue to pay for essential services amounts to a highly

regressive tax. Meanwhile, the industry has played down claims that gambling is addictive for a small proportion and financially damages many others.

William Thompson, a University of Nevada professor who specialises in research into gambling, estimates that three-quarters of gamblers can exercise self-control. But a fifth lose enough to hurt their families, while about 4 per cent cannot stop without help, and 0.5 per cent become highly self-destructive. The industry claims, with some justice, that most studies have been small in scale. If it achieves nothing else, President Clinton's commission will perform a public service by taking a tough look at the figures on both sides of the argument.

But the problem is that even if the commission concludes that the benefits of gambling are more than offset by the damage to the poorest people in society greater than previously thought, it is not clear that it can do much about it.

It is late in the day to start designing a national gambling policy from scratch: given the growing power of state governments to dismiss instructions from Washington, it may be too late to have any effect. It would be politically impossible for the White House at this stage to tell state governors to shut gambling halls.

The one policy open to the US Government is to impose federal taxes for the first time on the industry. Clearly, as even opponents of gambling agree, this would have the same regressive effect as local taxes, hitting poorer people harder than those richer.

But it is not necessary to be as cynical as directors of gambling companies to say that this is the most likely outcome. The lure of apparently easy money is as addictive for politicians as for gamblers.

But to dress up new taxes in the deceptive arguments of existing ones by claiming that the industry is always good for poor communities would be a pity. It would negate the only value the commission is likely to have — shedding light on an industry that has worked hard at being misunderstood.

Simon saga highlights a clash of cultures

Lord Young on why business and politics are worlds apart

Lord Simon of Highbury can enjoy his holiday now, for he has been bloodied as a politician and his first crisis is over. Of course, if he is going to be effective in his new life he will have many more, but I do not suppose that he wishes to be reminded of this today.

What this affair has shown once again is the difference in culture between the worlds of business and politics. I have changed cultures twice in my life and each time the effects were bewildering. My first time was when I left the law to work for Isaac Wolfson, the dynamic head of Great Universal Stores. My whole world fell apart, for as a solicitor I had been brought up to say no, to look out for the things that could go wrong for your client. Suddenly I was in an environment that only wanted to say yes, to find new and innovative ways to prosper and grow. It took me many months to feel comfortable in my new world.

More than 20 years later I left the world of business and became a somewhat unusual civil servant, first as special adviser to Sir Keith Joseph at the Department of Industry and later as chairman of the Manpower Services Commission. Sir Keith was the ideal minister to introduce me to the then mysterious ways of Whitehall. I was put into another building, given the grade of principal, told to report to an Assistant Secretary and left to sink or swim. For the best part of a year, I was in which I rarely saw any minister, I thought that I was drowning, rather than swimming. Gone were the days of top-down decision making, of looking at a problem and just dealing with it. Now recommendations had to be made to more senior civil servants, who in turn would make them to junior ministers, who in turn would discuss the position with the Secretary of State. Eventually, the decision would wend its way back to us, more often than not bearing little resemblance to our original recommendations. That first year was a very valuable apprenticeship for what was to follow, although I had no inkling of that at the time.

One or two of my seniors became more than a little nervous when I returned as Secretary of State five years later, but I was grateful for all they drummed into me.

My next job, at the Manpower Services Commission, completed my education. Given the charge of 24,000 souls and asked to reverse many of the policies and change the direction of the remainder, I did not have the power to hire, fire or promote any one of them. Civil servants had lifetime job protection, jobs went according to grade and you had to have the consent of the Civil Service Commissioners to recruit anyone into the service.

All the things I did by instinct in the outside world

were now denied to me. No longer could I see a bright young person and give him or her a chance in a much bigger job. No more saying "let's do this" meaning "now do it". All had to be by persuasion and consent and it took a great deal of time and effort. Once again, it was a considerable learning experience.

By the time I became a politician and entered the Cabinet as Minister without Portfolio I had made enough mistakes and created sufficient headlines to think that I knew what to do. Of course, I made many more mistakes and earned many more critical headlines, but I had learnt the lesson that making a decision was but the start of the political process and everything had to be explained to an often critical audience. What was important was not what you did, nor even the feeling that in your self you knew that you were doing the right thing, but making sure that it happened that way to the world.

I have no doubt that Lord Simon must wish today that he had sold the shares the day he became a minister and saved all this trouble. I do not know who advised him, but it always seemed to me that selling his shares on becoming a minister would not have triggered any insider dealing difficulties. As I remember (and ten years ago it was among my responsibilities at the DTI) this could have been classed as an involuntary sale and not one where he was taking advantage of any special knowledge. Still, all this is behind us now, but a valuable lesson will have been learnt for all future businessmen.

We do need an interchange between business and government, not because businessmen make better or more efficient ministers but because all government must be aware of the needs of the rest of the community. If we do not have sufficient regard for an enterprise society, to the wealth creation, processes in our midst, then our standard of living will go into relative decline. You have only to look across the Channel to see the results of governments failing to listen to the needs of business. Our new Government has started well in recruiting the likes of Martin Taylor and Lord Simon, although the Camelot affair was certainly a setback. Still, that is probably behind us now.

We are still early in the life of this Government and sufficient business leaders have already shown themselves to be sympathetic to the policies of new Labour for the Government not to be short of advice. Some may well be tempted to cross the line and enter the Government. When they do so (and I hope that some will, in spite of the publicity of the past few weeks) they should remember that they are entering a new world where appearances are even more important than reality.



Lord Young of Graffham

League players

BEHIND-THE-SCENES tussling at SBC Warburg, which clawed its way back from seventh to first place in the league of financial advisers on European cross-border transactions in the six months to end-June, according to the latest review by *Acquisitions Monthly*. The firm advised on 18 deals worth £6.9 billion, adding to its reputation as a haven for sick-suited corporate financiers. Down at Canary Wharf, fast-talking Morgan Stanley consolidated its position at number two in the table, advising

US-based Ennergy Corporation, alongside UBS, on its £1.2 billion acquisition of London Electricity. Morgan advised on 19 deals worth £5.4 billion in all. The prize for achievement goes to UBS, which made number three, a 15-place improvement on last year. Among 14 deals, UBS advised Coca-Cola Enterprises on the £1.9 billion acquisition of Coca-Cola & Schweppes Beverages.

Morgan Stanley aside, US players in the top half of the league table include JP Morgan in fourth spot, Goldman Sachs, eighth, and Merrill Lynch, ninth. Philip Healey, editor of *Acquisitions Monthly*, says: "US banks are making their mark on the market place. SBC Warburg has always done well; however there are plenty of other banks snapping at its heels." Time to watch their backs.

INTRIGUING note to the accounts of Megalomed, the media company chaired by Lord Saatchi, latterly of Conservative Party election fame. At end-March, I read, the princely sum of £333 was due from one Ms J. Hart, a director, "in respect of temporary personnel provided to her under normal commercial terms. All amounts due have been settled subsequent to the balance sheet date." Ms J. Hart, of course, is



Josephine Hart, aka Lady Saatchi, wife of the chairman, and successful novelist. "It's for temps for her books," explains Christopher Parker, the chief executive.

Spin-doctor

AMID the travails of Lord Simon of Highbury, spare a thought for Colin Seabrook, long-suffering press officer at the Department of Trade and Industry. Seabrook, one of Whitehall's more seasoned spin-doctors, spent most of Tuesday seeking to resolve the future over the peer's BP share stake. He has spent about 48 hours in the past two days tackling the issue. Seabrook knows a thing or two about handling a crisis. His pre-

vious boss was Peter Davis, the director general of the National Lottery.

NEC Needham

THE purge of Tories at Stanhope Gate continues. Yesterday saw the departure of another true-blue standard bearer, Sir Richard Needham, bound for NEC, the Japanese chip builder. Tadahiro Sekimoto, chairman, is convinced Needham is "Britain's longest-serving Minister of Trade". Not true. Needham spent three years at the DTI. Elsewhere, Standard Life has appointed John Cummins, 35, to the newly-created post of head of treasury. He joins from MBNA International Bank.

Close call

AAAH, the fast-paced world of insurance. Jennifer Morrison, marketing director of PI Direct, the new insurance company launched today, nearly saw her plans scuppered by a funeral procession. Morrison recently went on honeymoon to Ireland, roaming the countryside in a gypsy caravan. While on the road, she was anxiously awaiting a fax of her contract of employment — a minor point that had been allowed to slip ahead of the wedding. Morrison signed in the nick of time — just as a hearse was threatening to block her way. Not to be outdone, PI Direct's founder, Michael Wood, a former partner in Everheds, the City law firm, has been living up to his rep-

utation as a fast-living Australian. Wood, 36, who hails from Brisbane, is a dab hand at cricket, hitting 54 runs at a game in Kent on Monday. "I was doing my best not to get a black eye," he tells me.

MORE BA definitions. Passengers. "The paying guests of the airline who cannot be guaranteed to (a) board festooned with more gear than Sir Ranulph Fiennes; (b) demand that morning's edition of the Daily Express in Bangkok; (c) wait until the drinks trolleys are out before deciding to leave their seat."

JON ASHWORTH



Michael Wood, of PI Direct, is a dab hand at cricket



"It's incredible — surely something has got to give!"

A fresh look at the PFI

1. *Chlorophyll *a** and *Chlorophyll *b** were determined by the method of Arar and Collins (1971).

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

| Top 100 Low Companies | | | | Top 100 Low Companies | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|-------|-------|-----------------------|---------|-------|-------|
| Rank | Company | Price | % Chg | Rank | Company | Price | % Chg |
| 42 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 260 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 43 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 261 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 44 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 262 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 45 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 263 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 46 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 264 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 47 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 265 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 48 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 266 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 49 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 267 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 50 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 268 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 51 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 269 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 52 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 270 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 53 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 271 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 54 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 272 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 55 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 273 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 56 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 274 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 57 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 275 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 58 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 276 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 59 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 277 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 60 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 278 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 61 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 279 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 62 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 280 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 63 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 281 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 64 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 282 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 65 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 283 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 66 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 284 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 67 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 285 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 68 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 286 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 69 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 287 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 70 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 288 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 71 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 289 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 72 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 290 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 73 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 291 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 74 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 292 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 75 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 293 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 76 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 294 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
| 77 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 | 295 | 150000 | 1.25 | 2.5 |
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| 179* | 1335-Mel Allen | 164 | 98 | 1 | 12.8 | 10.1 |
| 180* | 1336-Mel Allen | 98 | + | 1 | 12.8 | 10.1 |
| 181* | 1337-Mel Allen | 98 | + | 1 | 12.8 | 10.1 |
| 182* | 1338-Mel Allen | 98 | + | 1 | 12.8 | 10.1 |
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| | | | | BRITISH FUNDS | | | |
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| 1987 | | | | 1987 | | | |
| High | Low | Stock | Price (£) | at end of 86 | Gr net inc | High | Low |
| SHORTS (under 5 years) | | | | LONGS (over 15) | | | |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1987 | 100 | 1 | 7.05 | 125% | 115% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1987-1988 | 100 | 1 | 8.74 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1988-1989 | 100 | 1 | 8.75 | 112% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1989-1990 | 100 | 1 | 8.84 | 110% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1990-1991 | 100 | 1 | 8.94 | 109% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1991-1992 | 100 | 1 | 9.24 | 103% | 95% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1992-1993 | 100 | 1 | 10.31 | 104% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1993-1994 | 100 | 1 | 11.22 | 102% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1994-1995 | 100 | 1 | 11.94 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1995-1996 | 100 | 1 | 12.71 | 107% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1996-1997 | 100 | 1 | 13.37 | 107% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1997-1998 | 100 | 1 | 13.95 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1998-1999 | 100 | 1 | 14.11 | 109% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 1999-2000 | 100 | 1 | 14.75 | 112% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2000-2001 | 100 | 1 | 15.37 | 109% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2001-2002 | 100 | 1 | 16.11 | 109% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2002-2003 | 100 | 1 | 16.74 | 111% | 100% |
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| 100% | 100 | Index 2008-2009 | 100 | 1 | 20.53 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2009-2010 | 100 | 1 | 21.16 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2010-2011 | 100 | 1 | 21.79 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2011-2012 | 100 | 1 | 22.42 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2012-2013 | 100 | 1 | 23.05 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2013-2014 | 100 | 1 | 23.68 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2014-2015 | 100 | 1 | 24.31 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2015-2016 | 100 | 1 | 24.94 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2016-2017 | 100 | 1 | 25.57 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2017-2018 | 100 | 1 | 26.20 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2018-2019 | 100 | 1 | 26.83 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2019-2020 | 100 | 1 | 27.46 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2020-2021 | 100 | 1 | 28.09 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2021-2022 | 100 | 1 | 28.72 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2022-2023 | 100 | 1 | 29.35 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2023-2024 | 100 | 1 | 29.98 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2024-2025 | 100 | 1 | 30.61 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2025-2026 | 100 | 1 | 31.24 | 111% | 100% |
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| 100% | 100 | Index 2027-2028 | 100 | 1 | 32.50 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2028-2029 | 100 | 1 | 33.13 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2029-2030 | 100 | 1 | 33.76 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2030-2031 | 100 | 1 | 34.39 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2031-2032 | 100 | 1 | 35.02 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2032-2033 | 100 | 1 | 35.65 | 111% | 100% |
| 100% | 100 | Index 2033-2034 | 100 | 1 | 36.28 | 111 | |



HONDA
don't make

A black and white cartoon illustration. Two men are standing on top of a large, rectangular electronic device, possibly a computer or a specialized piece of equipment. The man on the left is wearing a flight suit and a helmet, and he is holding a small object in his hand. The man on the right is wearing a suit and tie, and he is holding a megaphone. The device has a screen on the front showing a jagged waveform, and a power cord is plugged into the back. The background is dark and indistinct.

cards accepted

EDINBURGH: Treats for cinema buffs and music lovers as Scotland gears up for its annual cultural extravaganza

The six-day movie magician

Edgar G. Ulmer
made films fast
and cheap. W.
Stephen Gilbert
prepares a long
overdue showcase

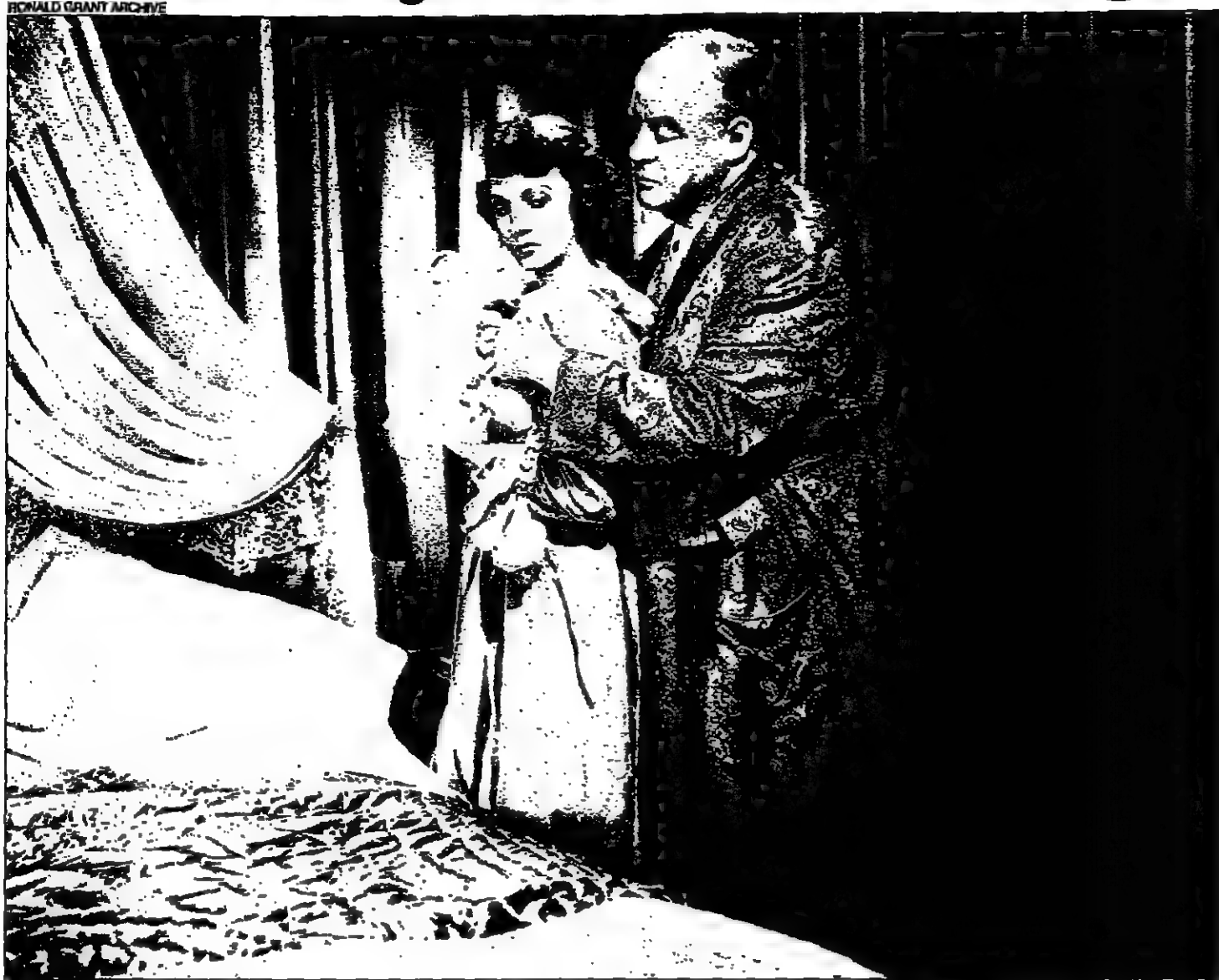
The name of Edgar G. Ulmer is unlikely to stop the traffic, save on those occasions when all the drivers are movie buffs. By the end of the month, however, his name ought to have been noised up and down Lothian Road, for Ulmer is the subject of an extensive retrospective at the Edinburgh Film Festival.

Widely forgotten in the United States (where he lived from 1923, when he was 19) and never known in Britain, the Austrian director is a film-maker whose work now speaks to increasing numbers of students and would-be directors, largely because of his sensibility but also in a period of tight money and inventive methods — because he so often made bricks without straw.

Between 1929 and 1965 Ulmer made 128 movies, just four of them for major studios. The figures disguise the fact that he habitually shot the whole film in six days. What was once seen as endearing cussedness now looks like pioneering virtue. Twenty-six testimonies to this style are on show at the festival, a crash course to be relished.

Thoughtful American cineastes doff their hats. "The director can rely only on his resourcefulness," says Martin Scorsese. "In fact Ulmer's idiosyncratic style grew out of such drastic limitations. This is why he has become over the years such an inspiration to low-budget film-makers."

"He was remarkable," John Landis says. "He managed to overcome tremendous obstacles and do quality work within an extraordinary variety of place and circumstance. He always took advantage of film itself in lighting and camera placement to enhance the production value of every project. He's constantly fascinating and original."



Martha Vickers and Sydney Greenstreet in *Ruthless* of 1948, Edgar G. Ulmer's sour and unyielding indictment of American business

And according to Peter Bogdanovich, "somehow he seemed never to lose his excitement or enthusiasm, no matter how lowly the work. He found ways to make things interesting. Everything that might be considered a hindrance by most was a challenging test for him. He took wild risks all the time and always landed on his feet."

The sensibility that now feels so contemporary is perhaps best seen

in *Detour*. Made in 1946 for a paltry \$20,000, it is a relentlessly bleak thriller that runs to only seven speaking roles and half a dozen sets, yet in the course of 69 minutes a man's romantic gesture in crossing the continent to be with his woman has led him down a road that undermines his sense of morality and then destroys his life.

This little gem perfectly encapsulates the mood of expatriate Euro-

pean film-making at the end of the war, a consuming fatalism whose roots were in German expressionism but whose eyes were on American corruption and the paranoia of being alone in a morally bankrupt land. Martin Scorsese calls it "an ironic morality play" and cites a line from the film's voiceover as a definition of film noir: "Whichever way you turn, fate sticks out its foot to trip you."

Another key picture is *Ruthless*. Ulmer's depiction of a *Citizen Kane*-like quest for wealth and power unredeemed by any "Rosebud" nonsense. Ulmer's driven hero performs a childhood feat of heroics similar to that of the hero of Frank Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life*: he saves another child from drowning (the same boy actor enacts the scene in each movie).

But Ulmer eschews both the

sentiment of Capra and the barroom self-advertisement of Orson Welles. *Ruthless* is as sour and unyielding as they come and Ulmer would have had it more so if the production company had supported him. But anti-Communism was at its height in 1948 and this indictment of American business was inevitably cut and diminished. The pseudonymous screenplay credit masks the identity of Alvah Bessie, one of the Hollywood Ten, who served time for so-called un-American activities.

Early in his career, it was Ulmer who first put together Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi in *The Black Cat* of 1934, which John Landis playfully dubs "glossy big budget Universal Studio horror". In fact its economy of means and the inadequacy of the juvenile leads scarcely harm Ulmer's vision of an intellectual joust, the subtext of which is the nature of capitalism.

He pulls off several stunning shots that anticipate an era of much more sophisticated camera work and, intriguingly enough, the image of a wife pursued in a tank, reminiscent in this year's *Batman & Robin*. This is a neglected classic, only bettered in the genre by James Whale's *Bride of Frankenstein* made the following year.

Edinburgh's season boasts collectors' items that may not pass your way again. There is *The Wife of Monte Cristo*, a piece of Dumas apocrypha and Ulmer's biggest project to date in 1946, taking all of a fortnight to shoot; *Green Fields*, a movie told in a language he did not speak, Yiddish, which yet made money in New York and his name in France, where his reputation has remained high; and *The Naked Dawn*, the most important of his late movies in Technicolor, a triangular story of lust shot as a sweaty, Mexican Western.

Edgar G. Ulmer is shining testament to the argument that you can make art without resources. With no marquee stars his films could never draw the town, but many a star has faded, while Ulmer's vision looks clearer today than in his lifetime.

● The Edgar G. Ulmer Retrospective runs at Cinemas Edinburgh (0131 228 2688) from Monday-August 23

Sixty minute theatre

Ambridge as the last redoubt of Shakespeare on radio? Sound daft enough to be true. Andrew Coker of London N19 wrote to *The Times* on Tuesday, saying that the change he would like to see on Radio 4 would be the dropping of endless amateur dramatics in *The Archers*. He cited the present Ambridge production of that play within a play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: "Actors playing countryfolk play actors playing countryfolk acting."

Quite so. One of the reasons I dislike *The Archers* is that it seems to be full of people one would cross a Bosnian minefield to avoid, so I am not best pleased with James Boyle's decision to give the show an extra airing every week. But that was a good tactical move by the Radio 4 Controller, who knows that

RADIO

more of *The Archers* is one way to get the guns of middle England off his lawn.

The thrust of Boyle's changes, announced last week, is as predicted in this space some time ago. They are neither populist nor half-baked and as such they are to be welcomed, though I cannot believe that the battle to retain *The Moral Maze* in its Thursday morning slot is yet concluded.

But back to Shakespeare. One of the more interesting aspects of Boyle's new schedule is that drama slots will in future be no longer than 60 minutes, which effectively means that, yes, Ambridge can have the Bard on an exclusive contract.

Boyle was speaking in code, if I have him right. For 60 minutes, read modern. Until now radio drama slots have tended to be dictated by theatrical conventions. One hour is not long to spend in a theatre but it makes perfect sense for radio. So if we are likely to get more of the fare I enjoyed at the weekend, then jolly good.

If this sounds like a sneaky way to mention *Ladies Day*, the Saturday Playhouse production written by my colleague Lynne Truss, I shall thwart accusations of bias by saying that he writes has a chance without the right actor, and Josie Lawrence was marvellous in this witty excursion through one of the last male bastions, the golf club.

If *Ladies Day* was on at 90 minutes, two half-hour plays of a very different nature late on Saturday night also showed the merit of brevity. *The Favour* and *The Art of Kindness* were both in the *New Found Land* season of North American plays. Each had absorbing complexities, each rewarded a little effort on the part of the listener.

None of this work is to every taste, but all of it warrants exposure on an articulate national network. If Shakespeare were around today, I expect he would cheerfully write for 60-minute slots. In changing times, good art will always keep up.

PETER BARNARD

Still life with colourful piano

András Schiff tells Hilary Finch about the musical chairs he will be playing at Edinburgh's Usher Hall

Among the early morning drift of tourists, scattering wind-blown in the great cathedral square of Cologne, a diminutive figure in an overlong greatcoat turns for a moment and pauses, suddenly magicked by the little mechanical pantomime of a musical clock.

This enchanted boy will, within ten minutes, be seated at the piano inside the concert hall of the Philharmonie, coiled like a spring, his fingers tangling with the woodwind, his feet marking out the dance of Bartók's Second Piano Concerto, his voice gently insistent, debating points of ensemble with the conductor in rehearsal. Two hours later, every one of András Schiff's fingernails is broken. "It's like a workout," he murmurs. "If only the keys were still made of ivory."

Before the seduction of the musical clock, Schiff's day had started with Bach — as it always does. And it is Bach

and Bartók, back to back, that he brings to Edinburgh next week, when he will perform the three Bartók Concertos with the Budapest Festival Orchestra, framed by late-night solo recitals of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Bach's 48 Preludes and Fugues.

"That's no coincidence," declares Schiff. "Bartók played a lot of Bach and edited his works. He was the most important composer for him."

"Of course, the 48 Preludes and Fugues were never intended for concert performance. But if you play them through, with the sort of concentration that's possible in these wonderful late-night concerts, you can create an extraordinary sense of community with the audience, something intensely spiritual. I start every day with Bach. He is perfect exercise for



the body, the mind, the spirit, the soul!"

If Bach is a major influence in Schiff's Barok, then so is the playing of Bartók himself, preserved in countless archive recordings. "Thank goodness we have all this material. What we would give to have it from Mozart! To hear Bartók himself playing is so beautiful, so revelatory. His playing is

anything but percussive. To think this cliché about his music still exists. Bartók was a product, after all, of the 19th century, of the Liszt school of playing. It's not as far from Paderewski as you might think, either. If you listen to Bartók playing Schumann or Chopin, the two hands are never quite together. And they shouldn't be in Bartók either. The musical notation may indicate one huge single chord, but Bartók doesn't play it, as so many young pianists do, cut out as if by a razor blade. No, it ripples like an arpeggio, back and forth, up and down. I cannot imitate it. But neither can I ignore it."

Schiff's own performances, more resonant, more soft-focused than, for example, those of his compatriot and contemporary, Zoltan Kocsis,

are also characterised by a unique meditative intensity in the second movements, particularly notable in the third concerto. How is he able to find such stillness within the life he is compelled to lead? "One must find it. I try to live that way. A year ago I moved from Salzburg to Florence. In Tuscany I found this sense of peace and quiet, of equilibrium between culture and nature. Even in one or two days there, I find I can recharge my batteries."

"Many people dislike this third concerto. They feel it's a step back from the first two. I don't agree. The composer has experienced revolution in his life, and come out the other side. It's a transfigured piece." Bartók's Third Concerto is a work for the mature years, then? "Well, not necessarily. I played it when I was only 20, still living in Hungary. And I came to the First Concerto last of all, and that was right, because it is the most difficult.



András Schiff starts every day with Bach: "Perfect exercise"

the most revolutionary of all. "Bartók was often attacked for writing it badly. But it is wonderfully written! It just takes a lot of time to achieve the proper balance with the orchestra. Bartók himself asked that the percussion be seated well forward in the work, right close to the piano." Schiff insists on this, too, and looks forward to his games of musical chairs in the

Usher Hall. How does this most exacting critic of instruments and venues rate Edinburgh's Victorian pile? "I'm marvellous! I love the Usher Hall. I haven't yet played Bartók in it, but I can't wait."

● András Schiff plays Bartók's three concertos on August 12 and 13 at the Usher Hall (0131 228 1155), and Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* in late-night recitals there on August 11 and 13

NEW CLASSICAL CDS: Seminal Soviet piano music; lesser-known Lehar; big-boned Beethoven

RECITAL

Hilary Finch

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Far removed from the principles of Soviet realism, Gubaidulina's own compositions caused considerable conflict in the 1960s and 1970s.

Beatrice Rauchs gives aptly daring and imaginative performances of the statuesque *Chaconne* of 1963. Gubaidulina's first commissioned composition, and of the 1965 Piano Sonata with its hauntingly beautiful Adagio.

Gubaidulina coloured her own childhood with a collection of *Musical Toys* in 1969: these 14 miniatures precede the sombre piano concerto, *Introsius*, of 1978, in which Rauchs is joined by the Kiev Chamber Players.

OPERA

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Paganini, Giuditte Riedel/Tamir/Hadley/Atkinson/ECO/Boyngye
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A YEAR ago Telarc boldly

launched a series of Lehar operettas sung in English, one disc apiece and no spoken dialogue. Even more boldly, this month they have gone for a pair of his lesser-known works: neither Paganini nor Giuditte has yet achieved a major London production.

Paganini is the earlier and superior of the two. Forget the preposterous story of the violinist's brief dalliance with the sister of Napoleon. Lehar serves up plenty of good tunes for the solo fiddle (Paul Barritt) and the singer in the title role. Boyngye's tenor of the moment, Jerry Hadley, dispenses all the ease and charm he reserves for this repertory in *Girls were made*

to love and kiss. The *Viljalled* apart, Lehar never wrote a more rewarding aria.

Telarc's new soprano is Deborah Riedel, replacing Nancy Gustafson. She is only so-so in Paganini but comes into her own in *Giuditte*, where Lehar gives her a hit number, *Meinen Lippen sie küssen*. Much of the rest of the composer's one attempt at grand opera is considerably less inspired.

Barry Millington

■ BEETHOVEN

Piano Concertos Nos 2 & 3
Kissin/Philharmonia/Lewine
Sony SK 62026 *** £15.49
NO LONGER quite a wunderkind, at the age of 25 Evgeny Kissin is presumably regarded as a superstar — at least Sony feels it unnecessary

to say anything about him in the booklet of this recording: if I find it difficult to put my finger on what exactly makes these performances of Beethoven concertos so satisfying, I am nonetheless convinced that they are of exceptional quality.

In style they're somewhat towards old-fashioned Romanticism. Perhaps this is James Levine's influence: certainly he favours strong, dramatic tuttis in the fast movements and almost mystical lyricism in the slow ones. But Kissin is not far behind — in the Adagio of the *Emperor* he is profoundly meditative and highly eloquent.

Most of all, Kissin's tone is notable for its fullness: this is big-boned, muscular playing, yet translucent and capable of exquisitely delicate touches.

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Loser in a game of Russian rule

Lawrence
James asks
us to stop
blaming
Napoleon's
defeat on
the weather

If you want to know why the Russians are so jittery about Nato edging towards their frontier, look at their war memorials. There are those to the Second World War and there is the battlefield of Borodino, lovingly restored to look as it did the day Prince Kutusov fought Napoleon to a standstill. The plump field-marshal still has his place in the Russian pantheon and rightly so. Tolstoy warmly approved of the man and his methods. At the close of *War and Peace*, Tsar Alexander I tells Kutusov: "You have not only saved Russia, you have saved Europe!"

This was indeed so. In 1812, as in 1944-45, a Russian army rescued Europe from a ruthless, self-created man of destiny with a vision of a continent where his will was paramount. Like Hitler, Napoleon got his way by war. He dictated treaties at gunpoint and maintained a vast military machine to chastise anyone who stepped out of line. When Russia did, Napoleon unsheathed his sword and prepared to dazzle the world with another display of his old tactical magic. He would destroy the Russian Army with a single hammer blow, occupy Moscow and impose terms on a chastened Tsar.

It all went dreadfully wrong. On St Helena, Napoleon convinced himself that his strategy had been correct and blamed his undoing on the Russian winter and his subordinates' shortcomings. This was pure delusion. The Russian summer, sultry and punctuated by torrential thunderstorms, proved more debilitating than the cold of winter for an army largely made up of French, German, Italian and Polish conscripts, many of whose hearts were not in the business.

The commissariat soon buckled under the pressure of feeding hundreds of thou-



Berger's painting of Alexander I presenting the Kalmyks Cossacks and Basquiers of the Russian Army to Napoleon in July 1807, five years before the retreat from Moscow.

NAPOLEON IN
RUSSIA
By Alan Palmer
Constable, £19.95
ISBN 0 09 47560 5

sands of men and horses. Russian armies retired and the peasants burnt crops and slaughtered livestock. Hungry men wandered off to scavenge so that when it came within striking distance of Moscow, Napoleon's army was in a state of apparent delinquency. This was just what Kutusov had intended. Tolstoy has him sum up his strategy in a

sentence: "Patience and time are my warriors, my champions." They proved their worth: Napoleon was confronted with what he feared most, an extended war of attrition of the sort Wellington was winning in Spain. Within a few weeks of entering Russia, Napoleon was trapped.

A withdrawal, or any slackening of the pace of advance, was unthinkable. Either of the two would be universally interpreted as a failure of nerve, fatal for the reputation of a man whose prestige rested on audacity and winning battles. He had to press on: "The army cannot stop, motion alone keeps it together."

The momentum petered out in Moscow. Retreat was unavoidable: the Tsar would not bow to a stunned, disintegrating army and winter was hurrying on.

With Cossacks on their heels and dysentery in their bellies, the survivors staggered back to Poland. Fifteen months later, Tsar Alexander led the allied sovereigns into Paris. Alan Palmer has done justice to these epic events with a lively, vivid narrative, written with the appropriate style and panache. He has also produced an enlightening comparison for anyone resolved to read *War and Peace* this summer.

The devil in the deep

Robert Ballard

THE PERFECT
STORM
By Sebastian Junger
Fourth Estate, £14.99
ISBN 1 85702 720 5

As I read *The Perfect Storm*, chills ran up and down my spine as it constantly reminded me of past moments at sea when I feared for my life. Having spent countless months at sea, my memory has served me well by immediately erasing the storms through which I have passed when my life hung in the balance.

Most people, like myself, think of the sea in a romantic context, of fair winds and a following sea, of dolphins playing in the ship's wake.

But *The Perfect Storm* has done away with that as it graphically reminds you that the sea has a far darker side. A face of immeasurable fury, a living Dante of violent winds and towering seas when a mariner's sole thought is that of survival, when ungodly men cower in their bunks below decks praying and promising to repent if God will only take them through this mighty tempest alive.

The Perfect Storm is the closest you will ever come to

drowning at sea without actually having to do so. But it is more than just a non-fictional tale. Stephen King might write. It literally dissects and clinically analyses a freak storm that took place in October of 1991, that caught a hapless fleet of American fishermen on the dangerous fishing grounds off the Grand Banks.

The book focuses on one particular ship, the *Andrea Gail*, following its crew through the days before they set sail on their fatal journey. It's a human tale of men and women who extract a living from the sea in one of the hardest of all professions, commercial fishing. You follow them through what should have been a typical voyage but instead one from

which they never return.

But the crew of the *Andrea Gail* are not the only ones to be caught in the storm as the rescuers sent to them, and others, become victims too. At times, the narrative decouples itself from the drama of the moment to explain in detail various aspects of meteorology, oceanography, or technology so that the reader understands why this is *The Perfect Storm* and why the *Andrea Gail* doesn't have a fighting chance of survival.

If the book has any failing, it is frequently during these narrative moments. It is as if you are reading a coroner's report or an operator's manual for the average reader, these passages just pass, leaving them to wonder what they just read and why they were there. At times, it seems like filler.

But despite such flaws, *The Perfect Storm* is well worth the read, although I do not recommend it being read while at sea. Pick a nice summer day in a quiet spot well above sea level.



BIBLIOMANE

And worse, *Who's Afraid of Schrödinger's Cat?* "Mendel's Dwarf" and *Gulliver's Salad*. Time for a new routine.

André Bernheim's amusing collection of anecdotes about how famous people came by their names — "Now all we need is the title (Norton, £6.95) — is full of the duds that got away. "Gone with the Wind," for instance, "nearly went to the board" as *Basil Black Sheep*.

Bernheim also relates that Robert Lowell "revised" his work so thoroughly that according to his wife, Jean Stafford, a poem he began with the title "To Jean: On her Confirmation" ended up as "To a Whore at the Brooklyn Navy Yard".

Three vanity publishing houses have been investigated by the Office of Fair Trading, as a result of concerns that they have been misleading customers. Vanity publishers solicit typescripts from aspiring authors, which for a fee they knock out as books. It is generally left to the author, however, to distribute them.

Well, more people want to write books than to read them, so perhaps this is a legitimate service. We are urged to refer to it as "joint-venture publishing", which reminds me of a sign in New York advertising "pre-worn clothes".

And yet customers are being conned. I recently happened to read a book produced by one of the outfits in question, which showed unmistakably that the publishers had not performed their own inescapable duty: the text had not been edited. But then the lack of editing by some mainstream publishers is a continuing and worsening scandal.

My advice to people planning to publish their own books is "don't". But if you must, then read Ann Krizinger's *Bring It to Book* (Scriptum, £8.99). This is a basic ABC for self-publishers — self-publishers need no such help — and although the writing is not itself exemplary, it contains much practical sense.

JIM MCCUE
The Claridge Press recently published Jim McCue's *Edmund Burke and Our Present Discontents*, price £14.95.

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Tom Bower on a book charting the resurgence of European neo-Nazism



If the boot fits... One of a growing number of European neo-Nazis prepares for another fight on the town

Another right eye-opener

Constant revelations about the resurgence of Fascism across Europe are disturbing. Recently, the Slovak Government commissioned and distributed school textbooks maliciously distorting the history of the Holocaust: while Croatia's Government repeatedly glorifies the wartime bestiality of its Ustase army. Contrary to the conviction that Hitler's aggressive racism is nowadays only espoused by a ragbag of social deviants, it appears that the bacillus which Hitler nurtured was never surgically removed from Europe's political system.

The original cause for this revival of neo-Nazism, Martin Lee argues, was the protection and employment of wanted Nazi war criminals by the Allied Governments after 1945. Undoubtedly, that cynical betrayal infected Europe's morality and politics, as British and American officers, barely days after Germany's surrender, began secretly recruiting German mass murderers to serve their various interests in intelligence, science and industry.

By 1949, when the Federal Republic of Germany was born, the Germans' sins had been, while not completely forgotten, effectively ignored. Other countries, noting the Allies' blind eye to murder, welcomed the silent diaspora of wanted Nazis spreading across the world to provide Latin American dictatorships

THE BEAST RE-AWAKENS
By Martin Lee
Little, Brown, £20
ISBN 0 3169 9044 4

with expertise in torture or to serve Arab governments as rocket scientists and intelligence operatives.

More sinisterly, most incriminated servants of Nazism had remained in Europe. Thousands became ennobled as senior officials in West Germany or, like Otto Skorzeny, the extraordinary SS officer who rescued Mussolini, lived openly in Spain. Beneficiaries of the Cold War, they never repented their sins. On the contrary, ageing Nazis in Germany and across the world welcomed young disciples attracted to undisguised Nazi political parties, especially in West Germany. Reminiscing about past glories, they preached Aryan superiority and, most importantly, denied the Holocaust. Eager to suck and inherit the Nazis' experience, the new Fascists were dedicated to continue Hitler's struggle, targeting defenceless immigrants before challenging the state. As memories and an accurate understanding of the Nazi era becomes contaminated by cynical revisionism, the new Fascists have undoubtedly gained political credibility.

In Martin Lee's opinion, there is a direct link between old Nazi propagandists like Skorzeny, the bomb outrages perpetrated by Italian neo-Fascists in the 1970s which murdered hundreds of innocents and Timothy McVeigh's bomb in Oklahoma. The source of that link, Lee argues, is a revival of neo-Fascism in Germany epitomised by the recent murders of immigrants by youths screaming "Heil Hitler" while, allegedly, police observed passively from the sidelines. That tolerance of racist aggression, writes Lee, is fostered by Helmut Kohl's brazen nationalism and his uncritical espousal of extreme right-wing policies, "metastatising like a cancerous growth in German ruling circles".

Euro-sceptics, suspicious of Kohl's messianic pursuit of European unity as a camouflage for a German plot to finally win hegemony, might be convinced. Others will deride Lee's conspiracy theory and praise Germany's recent democratic record. Yet the electoral strength of Jean-Marie Le Pen in France, Jörg Haider in Austria and of the new extreme right-wing parties in many former communist countries including Russia do justify some of Lee's alarm. Even as minorities, the new Nazis' potency reek warnings of future bloodshed. Sadly, Lee's American slang undermines the credibility of his argument.

Tibet — the Roof of the World, the Land of Snow, the stomping ground of the Yeti — lends itself to extreme representation. Its snowy peaks are either associated with the sort of bumbling lama found in Herges' *Tin Tin in Tibet* and Kipling's *Kim*, who twiddles his sorcerer's beard, while Orning and ah-ing into his alms bowl — or the more chronic snaps of political refugees on the cover of donation envelopes. Hollywood has done little to discourage its mystification, and two films, *Seven Years in Tibet* (adapted from the Heinrich Harrer classic) and *Kundun* (a title for the Dalai Lama) are due out this year. The latter is based on Mary Craig's book of the same name, curiously, if oddly titled, as it promises to be a biography of his family.

It is a down plot — rags to riches to rags again — which begins with an account of how the family of a small boy, found their lives irrevocably changed.

Craig, drawing on information from Kundun's autobiography, conveys the upheaval from a simple existence on the yak-herding plains of Amdo, to Lhasa high society. The Dalai Lama and his mother escape the steam-hurrying. But even *bodhisattvas* have embarrassing parents and Kundun's father is shown to have all the spending power of a first-time lottery winner, with an open reputation for caddishness.

His siblings' lives, as Craig tells them, from his Chinese occupation through to their exile, take on a particularly tragic quality. Although it would be unfair to say that they have given up the struggle for Tibetan independence, you can't help but feel they are simply treading water. The heartbreaking descriptions of

Dalai of the land

Alex O'Connell

KUNDUN
A Biography of the
Family of the Dalai
Lama
By Mary Craig
HarperCollins, £17.99
ISBN 0 00 62783 8

THE SACRED LIFE
OF TIBET
By Keith Downman
Thorsons, £12.99
ISBN 0 7225 325 6

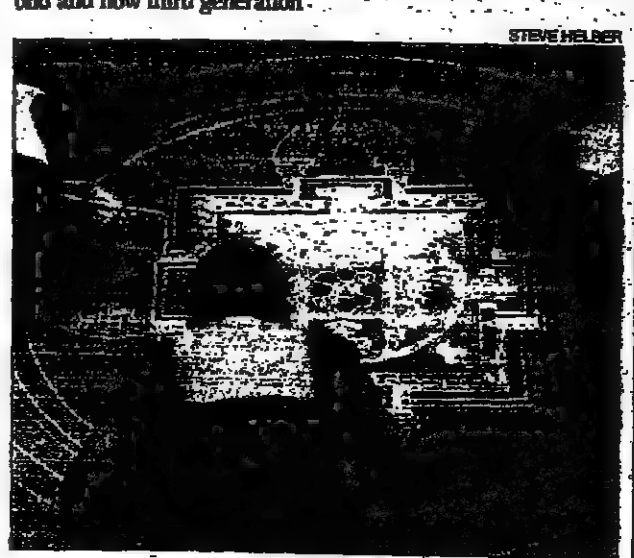
the repercussions of genocide are eerily echoed in their personal stories.

His sister Jetsun Pema — as founder of the Tibetan Children's Villages, an education project for new arrivals, second and now third generation

refugees — comes across as the only one of them still actively involved in the struggle to preserve a fading culture.

The Spiritual Life of Tibet is the sort of cultural aspic to keep Tibetan history alive: a cross between children's fantasy and a *Bodecker* for pilgrims. Downman's book is an exquisitely crafted historical and cultural trek around the chortons and gompas of the plateau. Downman necessarily uses maps that escaped the nips and tucks of Chinese cartographers. He navigates with expert precision. Don't be put off by the New Agey chapter headings — "Pegging the Earth", "The Mountains and Binding Gods and Demons".

As the shamanic characters — female sky goddesses called skydancers, (*khandromas, dakinis*), *Fleshless White Snow Peak* (renamed *Indestructible One-Eye* after being hit by her master with a "dorge thunderbolt") and *Hungry Ghosts* (*pidaks*) — battle it out on the mountain tops, we can be sure, thanks to the likes of Downman, that the oral tradition remains intact.



Land of war and dispatches from the roof of the world

AS AUGUST
Past its
shelf
life

Roger Scruton is unconvinced by a post-modern theologian who has substituted faith and love for nihilism and natural science

On Cupitt is an iconoclastic theologian, who has used his wide philosophical knowledge and familiarity with cultural trends to defend a kind of postmodernist Christianity — a Christianity, without dogma, without faith, and without God. "We live at a time," he writes in *After God*, "when the god of the philosophers, the really existing, all-powerful Being out there, is rapidly fading away, and people are tending to assume that when he dies, religion dies too." The assumption, he believes, is false. Not only can we love God while believing him to be dead (for don't we love our dead relatives just as much or more, when they no longer bother us), we can cobble together a new religion by means of the very thinking which destroyed the old. This new religion will be "naturalistic" — founded in the scientific view of the world. But it will retain certain "tricks", as Cupitt describes them, whereby we can live at peace with ourselves and, each other, without the exacting demands of an ancestral faith. For example, there is the Eye of God — the trick of seeing oneself as though through God's eyes, "under the aspect of eternity". There is also the trick which Cupitt calls "Solar Living", "the trick of casting oneself unreservedly into the flux of existence, spending oneself, living as hard as one can, burning without being afraid of burn-out."

If that is all Cupitt's book contained,

Taking the theo out of theology

AFTER GOD

By Don Cupitt

Whidenfeld & Nicolson, £11.99
ISBN 0 297 81952 6

then it would risk being dismissed as New Age whimsy. But *After God* also presents a passionate and fascinating view from outside the religious way of life. Cupitt argues that religion emerged from animism precisely when our hunter-gatherer ancestors began to settle and cultivate the land. The growth of the agricultural way of life required a central authority, who would reinforce the attachment to a single place, and impose the laws and habits required by peaceful living. This authority was the god, who took up residence in his temple and sanctified the land and the city. Each god would be bound by a covenant to the people who worshipped him, and whose spirit he was. The god of religion is the state, symbolised and personified in supernatural form.

That view of religion is not new — you find versions of it in Dostoevsky, Levi-Strauss and Nietzsche. But Cupitt has the gift of presenting old ideas in fresh and — as he would put it — "post-

modern" idiom. He sees religion as a system of symbols which signify nothing apart from themselves. The language of religion is all that we have but, he goes on to suggest, it is also all that we need. For, properly understood, God is not distinct from the language which invokes and describes him. One is constantly startled by Cupitt's vivid way of defending this point and forced to ask: is it true? and: what then must I think and do? To the extent that Cupitt's purpose is to prompt those questions, his book must be judged a considerable success.

Behind his arguments, however, there is a real and dubious hostility to the old religions. For Cupitt, traditional

religion is the source of group identity, of the distinction between Us and Them, and therefore of nationalism, xenophobia and war. In place of traditional faith Cupitt wishes to put a Fukuyama-ish acceptance of the post-modern world — the world of global markets and multinational enterprises, of fluid identities and virtual communities, in which everything is on offer and nothing imposed. Cupitt's religion of "tricks" is designed as a survivor's kit in this new environment, and one that will neutralise the dogmas which set obedience and war above *laissez-faire* and markets. He openly admits that he is a nihilist, while believing that nihilism, suitably dressed up, is a peaceful and pragmatic religion that can be successfully marketed to the young.

I remain unpersuaded. Nihilism is all very well in a Cambridge don, but outside the cloister it has the habit of turning nasty. The old religions may have engendered terrors, but nothing on

the scale of the two great experiments in global nihilism that have dominated our century and caused its most terrible war. Furthermore, I seriously doubt the philosophical underpinning of Cupitt's negative theology. He flirts with pragmatism, deconstruction and a variety of other assaults on "objective truth". The fact is, however, that he believes in the objective truth of science. The God whom Cupitt dismisses with a valedictory wave of the hand never claimed to be part of nature, but only its transcendental ground. He is not mentioned by empirical science, because he cannot be. If he exists then naturalism is true, and the belief in God must be explained in Cupitt's way. The explanation of religious belief cannot, therefore, be used to disprove it.

Of course, this does not mean that you can persuade post-modern people to return to pre-modern religion. But that is largely because you cannot persuade them to do anything, except what they already desire. "Post-modern" is just a trendy way of saying "spoiled". Cupitt's "tricks" can be accepted by post-modern people because there is no cost attached to them. He believes there is no such thing as blasphemy, but surely, he must believe there is such a thing as hubris. And maybe there is truth in the old Greek religion, which told us that hubris will be punished.



Cupitt: faith no more?

A remembrance of things... at last

Daniel Johnson

A BOOK OF MEMORIES
By Peter Nadas

Cape, £20
ISBN 0 224 05534 X

The great European novel is back with a remembrance. A *Book of Memories* by Peter Nadas was first published in the author's native Hungary more than a decade ago, having waited five years while the Communist censors chewed it over. This prodigious work is thus a product, not of the 1990s, but of the 1970s; and one may well wonder why it has taken so long to appear in English. Indeed, even after the rave reviews with which West German critics greeted this "inner history of our century" six years ago, it is still possible that British readers will fail to embrace the novel as a masterpiece.

The last Continental novel to be universally acclaimed here was Patrick Suskind's *Perfume*, to which *A Book of Memories* stands in the same kind of relation as Dostoevsky to Huysmans, or Saul Bellow to William Burroughs.

Its greatness does not merely consist in the sustained length of the novel (700 pages); nor in its panoramic historical breadth; nor even in its formal experimentation with multiple narratives, interleaved and modelled. Nadas tells us, on Plutarch's *Lives*. No, what makes this *Book of Memories* so memorable is the sheer quality of the prose, its subtlety and intelligence, which shines through what seems an elegant and unobtrusively American translation.

Nadas was 14 when the 1956 uprising in Budapest turned his family's world upside down, and the most obviously autobiographical narrative concerns a youth whose adolescence is gradually overshadowed by awakening sexual and political perversion. The boy's mother is dying of cancer, his father is a Communist state prosecutor whose best friend — and rival for his wife's affections — has been imprisoned after the father's betrayal. The portrait of life among the *Nomenklatura* is utterly convincing, rising to a climax when guilt, hypocrisy, secrecy, and insanity combine in an unforgettable dance of death. As the narrator's mentally retarded little sister screams — she is later consigned to an

institution, as Nadas himself was — the scales fall from his eyes and he tries to flee. The 1956 revolution and its suppression are described retrospectively, as if the memory were too painful to be confronted directly, by an older, wiser narrator to his male lover living in the East Berlin



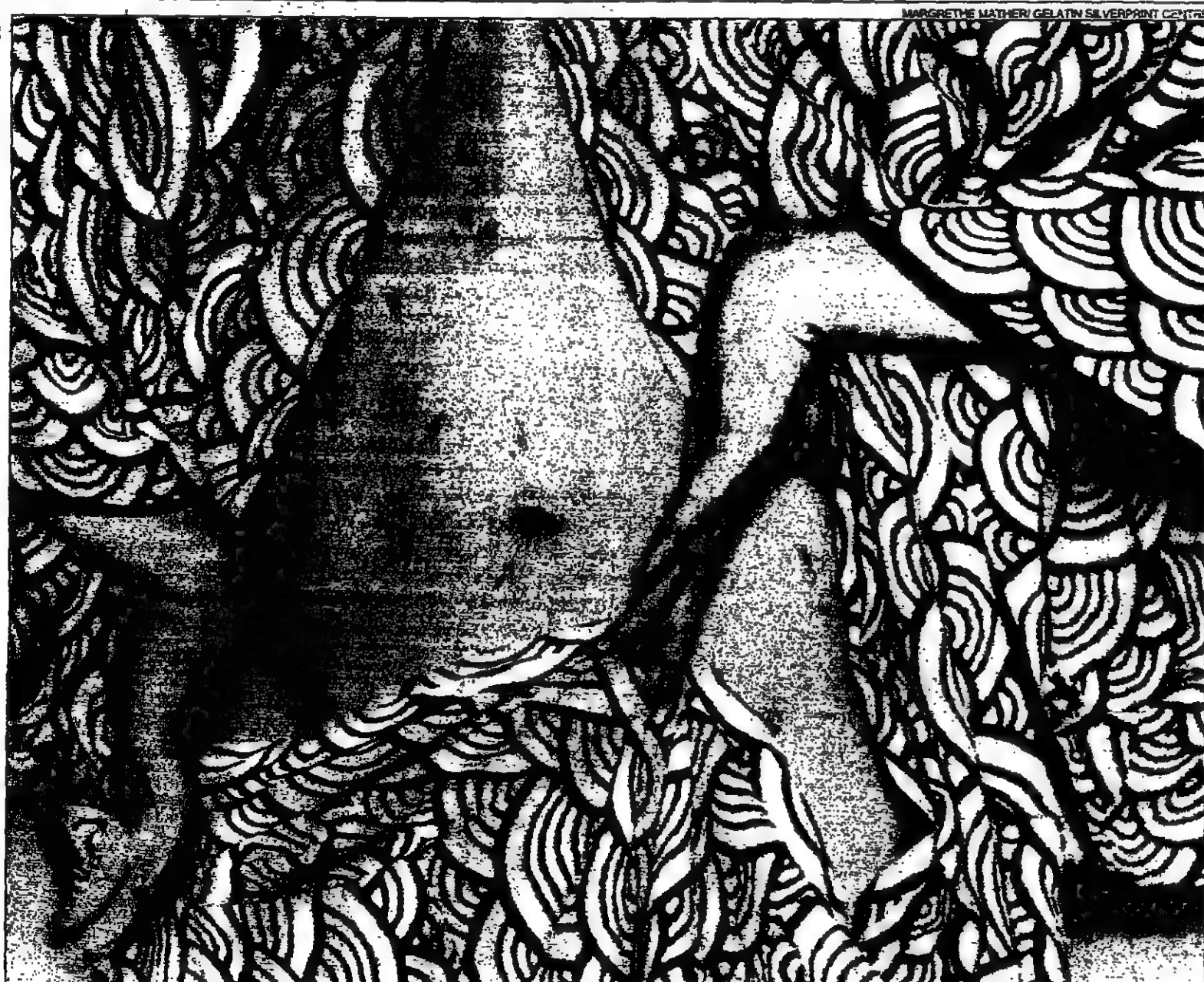
Memories of the Hungarian uprising

refuge, the hysterical actress Thea and the interfering landlady Frau Kuhnert, Melchior is living a life — the life of a privileged intellectual cynic, who pretends that the two super powers are all-powerful and interchangeable, while living on the sufferance of the secret police. It is all very well done, and I can testify to its authentic atmosphere, having lived in Berlin a few years later.

Less easily comprehensible is yet another parallel narrative, that of a novel which the author is writing in Berlin, but which is set in the earlier pre-Communist era of bourgeois individualism. The narrator again dwells on his intense devotion to his mother and the sins of his philandering father.

Thus throughout this tripartite narrative, the unholy trinity of politics, sex and the family is explored on three different temporal planes. As the scale is that of a trilogy, so Nadas breaks it up into three novel-length parts. The novel begins slowly, though strongly, and only the persistent reader will be rewarded. But this is not a gloomy book: innocence, beauty and joy, their absence felt keenly, survive even during the darkest years of corrupt idealism. But they survive only as

memories. To what should one compare this incomparable novel? Its digressions are as entertaining as Proust's. Its ironies recall Thomas Mann. Its themes suggest Robert Musil, and its humour Italo Svevo. But Nadas is his own man, very much of our time, unself-consciously attempting to do justice to his catastrophic experiences, in so doing, he restores dignity to the novel: the poetry of history.



Billy Justerna in Man's Summer Kimono, c. 1923 from *A History of Women Photographers* by Naomi Rosenbaum. Abbeville Press, £46

A dressing down for the boys

Fiona Pitt-Kethley meets the cast of cancan girls and belly dancers that form the history of erotic dancing

There is a photograph of La Goulue when she was young and relatively slim on the cover of Lucinda Jarrett's *Stripping in Time: A History of Erotic Dancing*. She is usually only known by Toulouse Lautrec's portraits of her. One of the inventors of the cancan, she will forever be associated with the heyday of the Moulin Rouge, although she ended her career as an overweight lion-tamer.

La Goulue is only one of the cast of curious characters Jarrett assembles. But her history is subjective and far from universal in its scope. Male stripping and table dancing hardly rate a mention, and sex shows, only a few lines. The countries covered in detail are few: England, America, France, Germany and

Egypt. There is absolutely nothing on erotic dance acts in the Far East.

Belly-dancing has received a more interesting and thorough coverage in Wendy Brown's *Serpent of the Nile*. In spite of the subtitle, Jarrett's book is more of a history of stripping, specifically. As such, it is also a history of the changing faces of women and censorship. A good many strippers were persecuted by the authorities. Increasingly, Egypt, the home of the belly dance, is clamping down and introducing petty legislation about the showing of flesh. In past decades, there

STRIPPING IN TIME
A History of Erotic Dancing

By Lucinda Jarrett
Pandora Press, £9.99
ISBN 0 04 40980 0

were similar problems in the West. For many years, strippers were not allowed to move when they were completely naked. Yet enterprising performers could always use absurd rules to their advantage. The fact that nipples had to be covered in 1950s Broadway shows led to the invention of

tassels — something many modern go-go dancers would not be without.

Every country promotes a different kind of woman. In France, strippers were petite but curvaceous, while America preferred them "big as a season, brash as a steer".

Several of Jarrett's heroines are given monologues. I liked these parts of the book least. The monologues all sound a little samey. Fiction is often far less eloquent than facts. *Stripping in Time* is essentially a feminist and biased history: "Female strippers are all strong women proud of an expressive sexuality." But is

this true? Not really of those I've seen. Apart from a few notable and historic examples, most strippers are rather worse dancers than the average performer in a musical.

These days, a good dancer can earn more elsewhere. The average stripper is probably no more "strong" or "proud" than any other woman in any other job. But the profession has thrown up a few unusual characters. Apart from La Goulue, I rather liked Dora Vivacqua, Luz de Fuego, who specialised in having a snake remove her *cachecoste*, thus bypassing Brazilian laws against full nudity. In a speech curiously reminiscent of Eve in the Garden of Eden, she would complain: "It's not my fault, it's his. He hates to see me dressed."

The Mystery of the Stradivarius of Scotland Yard

Ben Macintyre

THE DOCTOR, THE DETECTIVE AND ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

By Martin Booth
Hodder & Stoughton, £20
ISBN 0 340 64897 X

literary achievement". He was desperate to kill off the detective, did so, and then reluctantly resurrected him again. Mr Booth makes a valiant, but only partially successful case in support of Conan Doyle's assertion that his historical novels, poetry and works of history formed a

most substantial contribution to literature. Measured against the Sherlock Holmes canon, the first of the blockbuster phenomenon, these are thin and often wildly cranky. The unparalleled success of Holmes is owed, in large part, to the flawed and not wholly attractive nature of the detective himself. However brilliant he may be, Holmes can be sanctimonious, superior and fabulously patronising. His long-suffering sidekick, Doctor Watson, is by contrast the classic straight-talking Englishman: ponderous and enthusiastic to the point of naivety. The greatest Sherlock Holmes mystery of all is why "My dear Watson" does not

brain the detective with his violin.

The tension between Holmes and Watson is the central motor of the stories, the spark that gives them such enduring appeal, but as Booth points out, the two fictional characters are also reflections of Conan Doyle's contrasting personality.

In a piece of doggerel directed at a critic who strayed too close to that suggestion, Conan Doyle insisted:

"Please grip this fact with your cerebral tentacle. The doll and its maker are never identical."

Yet Conan Doyle's towering ego, his unshakable faith in his own opinions, his mood swings are the central traits of his greatest fictional creation, while his chivalry and lack of guile were those of the good doctor.

It was not always a happy combination. If Conan Doyle's belief in spiritualism were a mark of Watsonian openness, the ferocity with which he advocated his cause,



Doyle: renaissance man

culminating in widespread mockery when he fell for a photographic fairy hoax pulled by two adolescent girls, was the stuff of Holmes at his most arrogant.

Holmes was a polymath, but he was not a patch on his maker. Conan Doyle's grave-stone recalls a "Knight, Patriot, Physician and Man of Letters." To this might be added: sportsman, polemicist,

dramatic impresario, skiing promoter, soldier, Olympic official, war propagandist, animal rights protector, ship's doctor, lecturer, politician (failed) and tireless crusader for the spirit world beyond our ken (failed utterly).

Mr Booth picks his way through the ripping yarn judiciously, avoiding the hagiographic tone of so many Conan Doyle biographers and keeping the pedantic textual analysis to which sherlockians are prone to a refreshing minimum.

Conan Doyle was an intriguing Victorian renaissance man, as pig-headed as he was big-hearted. He believed he was always right, even when he was egregiously wrong; when he got it right, as he did so magnificently with the Sherlock Holmes stories, his grandiosity made him partially blind to his own achievement.

As the writer E.W. Hornung, his brother-in-law, wittily observed: "Though he might be more humble, there is no police like Holmes."

JAPANESE tourists drift down Baker Street in ever-increasing numbers looking for the home of Sherlock Holmes. The stories of the fictional detective have been translated into virtually every language, including Esperanto, Eskimo and Pitman's shorthand. The Scotland Yard database is called "Holmes", and letters still arrive there requesting the detective's help. Holmes has even invaded the German dictionary with "sherlockieren", meaning "to deduce".

Sherlock Holmes is probably the single most popular character in literary history, far better-known than his creator, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. As Martin Booth observes in his admirably balanced, new biography of the author, no one would have been more surprised and more peevish at the astonishing breadth of the Sherlock Holmes cult than Conan Doyle himself, who regarded that aspect of his prodigious oeuvre as "a lower stratum of

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Bradbury strikes out on Maine Road to big time

Bradbury has swapped the Isle of Wight for urgent house-hunting in Manchester

[illegible]

... ..

CRICKET: FRUSTRATED MIDDLESEX SPINNER WAITING FOR SELECTORS' NOD OF APPROVAL

Tufnell hoping his turn has come

By MICHAEL HENDERSON

SO FAR this season it has been a case of "always the bridesmaid" for Phil Tufnell. England's senior spin bowler. He has been selected in the party for each one of the five Tests and, until this week, he has been released in time to play for Middlesex. Now, as England approach a game that they must win to have a chance of regaining the Ashes, he hopes to play his first Test in this country for three years, and his first ever at Trent Bridge.

Hopes, not expectations. He has seen too much in this year of damp, seaming pitches to take anything for granted. Indeed, his on-off Test career can be interpreted as one long lesson in disappointment. The last time he played on home soil was against South Africa at Headingley in 1994 and at times since then he must have despaired of getting another game.

"It has been disappointing not to play this summer," he said yesterday, "but there's no point moaning about it. You've just to carry on and I've always tried to play my hardest for Middlesex." Although he cannot really say it, any more than he can grumble about the kind of pitches that England have sought, wisely or unwisely, one senses that he has missed the challenge of bowling at the Australians.

Indeed, he has rarely been trusted in this country, where he has played only six of his 27 Tests, but desperate times require radical measures. If he gets the nod, if Michael Atherton wins the toss for the first time in this series and if England bat properly, he should have that challenge he craves in the fourth innings.

Despite his status as an occasional player, who seems to figure in the selectors' thoughts as a "just-in-case" pick, Tufnell professes to feeling part of the team. "When I'm playing for Middlesex, my



Tufnell, having drunk deeply of disappointment this summer, slakes his thirst at England's net practice. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

mind does not wander to the Test match.

"I feel part of it when I'm with the boys. Drive up, wish them well and go home if not required. It's up to the selectors to pick the side — and the pitches this year, I must admit, have not helped me particularly."

The selectors' strategy is not without risk. If Tufnell plays, at the expense of Devon Malcolm, England's first-change and second-change bowlers will be the Holford brothers

on their Test debuts. An attack that is missing Darren Gough, who has been their best bowler this summer, could be exposed brutally.

For all the fuss surrounding his emergence, Adam Holford is only an occasional bowler at county level and nobody should get excited about his prospects of growing into a Test match all-rounder worthy of the name. Ben, for all his promise, is a 19-year-old who has not yet earned a regular place in the Surrey

side. Once again, Tufnell might find himself cast in a defensive, or at least a holding role.

At this delicate stage of the series, England cannot afford to defend, which is why the selectors are preparing to roll the dice hoping that all the sizes come up. It may yet turn out differently. The pitch is greener than any seen at Trent Bridge for some years, which can only give Malcolm succour, but when they mull over the choice this morning,

messrs Lloyd, Atherton, Gough and Graveney may agree — nothing ventured, nothing gained.

It would be a venture, too, for it is 20 matches and five years since Tufnell took five wickets in a Test innings, at Christchurch. That "mad Saturday" at the Oval, when he bowled out West Indies for a pittance in the first innings and helped England draw the series, was all of six years ago. Most significant of all, his 24 wickets against Australia have

each cost 46. Shane Warne, by contrast, has got out 74 Englishmen at 24.

Of the four Australia bowlers who play at Nottingham, the most expensive against England is Glenn McGrath, whose wickets have come at 25. Figures can be used to support many an argument, but in this instance the point they make is plain as day. They bowl us out far more cheaply than we dismiss them and in that battle lies the tale of recent Ashes conflicts.

Newcomers struggle to contain Weston

By MICHAEL AUSTIN

NORTHAMPTON (first day of four: Worcestershire won toss; Worcestershire have scored 433 for five wickets against Northamptonshire)

WHEN John Blain, 18, on his championship debut, dismissed Tim Curtis with his fifth ball, Northamptonshire could not have imagined the punishment that their callow attack was to suffer later as Philip Weston and David Leatherdale both made centuries and shared a fifth-wicket partnership of 241 in 51 overs.

Weston, who was playing only because Graeme Hick was absent with a bruised finger, advanced to a career best 196 not out with 29 fours and three sixes from 331 balls. The bamboozled Leatherdale struck 15 fours in an innings of 110, in which he received 158 balls.

The Northamptonshire captain, Rob Bailey, missed Leatherdale at mid-off when the batsman was 70, a disappointment for the bowler at the time, the Loughborough University left-arm spinner, Michael Davies, on his first-class debut. Another 100 runs were plundered before Tony Penberthy had Leatherdale caught at the wicket.

Northamptonshire's long injury list includes both opening bowlers — Paul Taylor, who strained ankle ligaments in a benefit match on Tuesday evening, and Mohammad Akram. Jeremy Snape, the off-spinner, and the all-rounder, David Cappel are out for the rest of the summer.

Blain, from Edinburgh, shared the new ball with Scott Boswell and, after forcing Curtis to play on, faced much hard labour but created a favourable impression with his whippy action.

Boswell, knees pumping, batted away and deserved his two wickets, those of Tom Moody and Gavin Haynes, both departing leg-before, though Moody ruefully inspected the bottom of his bat on the way back to the pavilion.

Reuben Spiring, rightly sent back by Weston, was run out by Penberthy, but harsh reality soon replaced optimism for Northamptonshire, who have

Wells ends drought of the century for Kent

By SIMON WILDE

CANTERBURY (first day of four: Kent won toss; Kent have scored 203 for four wickets against Essex)

PERHAPS roused by Lord MacLaurin of Knebworth and Tim Lamb looking on from the president's tent, Kent's top-order batsmen stirred into life yesterday. They could not have chosen a better occasion to come good than this meeting with Essex, who lie one place below them in the table in fourth position.

The Kent top five had failed to muster a century in 11 championship matches this season and nobody would have been more disappointed about that than Alan Wells, signed from Sussex amid much fanfare. Although he was Kent's leading run-scorer before yesterday, he must have felt he owed them a big innings.

Here, by dint of skill and sheer bloody-mindedness, he batted away for nearly four hours on a pitch that offered the seam bowlers plenty of assistance before, minutes after tea, effortlessly lifting such over mid-wicket to take his score from 94 to 100.

Wells was not the only Kent hero, because Cowdrey scored his first half-century of the season and kept his company for three hours in a third-wicket partnership of 138. Cowdrey was struck on the hand by a ball from Irfan but did not shrink the fight until he was leg-before to Irfan.

The rain returned soon after Wells reached his hundred to bring an early close, but not before Such had clawed back some ground for Essex by removing House cheaply on his championship debut. Kent will, nevertheless, fancy themselves to score an important win — Essex labouring without the injured Irfan and Cowdrey.

KENT: First Innings
T.R. Ward bowled by Andrew Smith 10-0-4-1
A.P. Wells not out 102
J.D. Cappel bowled by Smith 10-0-4-1
W.H. Haynes not out 100
Boswell 10-0-4-1
Total 203 (4 wickets, 67.1 overs)
M.A. Hick bowled by Wells 10-0-4-1
D.J. Cappel bowled by Wells 10-0-4-1
Total 100 (4 wickets, 31.0 overs)
Boswell 10-0-4-1
Total 203 (4 wickets, 67.1 overs)

Hostile Martin confirms groundsman's forecast

By RICHARD HOBSON

BLACKPOOL (first day of four: Warwickshire won toss; Lancashire, with seven first-innings wickets in hand, are 55 runs ahead of Warwickshire)

A STEADY stream of casualties ensured a busy afternoon for the St John Ambulance volunteers here yesterday. One man left for hospital with sunstroke while others com-

plained of sunburn or bee stings. The only surprise was that Neil Smith did not take refuge in the treatment caravan, seeking a cure for severe depression.

Captaining Warwickshire for the first time in the championship, his decision to bat on a green, seaming pitch backfired to such an extent that Lancashire had overhauled his side's meagre 139 a full hour before the close.

Peter Martin utilised the condi-

tions superbly while taking six for 46, four of those wickets earned during an initial burst of 11 overs. He maintained a full length and generated considerable sideways movement. The occasional delivery reared sharply, too.

Howard Mayor, the groundsman, informed a local newspaper four days earlier that the bowlers would find assistance in the first session, a crowd of 2,636 — generating record receipts here of £6,000 — watched

play unfold along the lines predicted. If only Smith had read the article.

Ostler edged to second slip in the third over before Wagb batted leg-before, missing a pull against Austin. Singh, shouldering arms, fell to Martin, as did Hemp before Martin beat Smith's expansive drive to leave Warwickshire 44-0-0-0. Penney fenced to slip and Brown, after 25 overs of stubborn resistance, could only fend Martin to short leg. Welch met his downfall pulling and

Austin could boast figures of four for 45 when he induced a nick from Donald.

Lancashire survived the new ball spell from Donald for the loss of only Wood and Fairbrother and Lloyd added 125 in 26 overs for the third wicket. As the pitch eased, Fairbrother reached his fifty in 119 minutes before he batted Brown to the wicketkeeper. Lloyd completed his own half-century in 100 minutes with nine fours.

Ratcliffe's class puts shine on a rainy day

By RUPERT COX

THE OVAL (first day of four: Surrey won toss; Surrey have scored 164 for two wickets against Durham)

DESPITE the assiduous efforts of the England and Wales Cricket Board to reform our summer sport, one aspect of the game remains beyond their control — the British weather. Yesterday, at the Oval, as if to emphasise the point, the threatening clouds that enveloped the ground for much of the day deprived two teams struggling to make an impact on the championship season of 59 overs.

With the home team stripped of four Test players, it seemed that the drab conditions might overshadow events on the field, particularly once Mark Butcher, dropped by England as well as disciplined by Surrey on Sunday, was bowled by Michael

Poster, via his pads, for 24. However, an excellent half-century from Jason Ratcliffe, during an unbroken third-wicket stand of 97 with the left-handed Ian Ward, handed Surrey the initiative.

On a greenish Oval wicket, Chris Lewis, the acting Surrey captain, elected to bat first. Surrey made an untroubled start, only for the openers, Butcher and Darren Bicknell, to fall in consecutive overs.

It was Ratcliffe who caught the eye, assured of front and back foot, he played the swinging ball in textbook fashion, detecting the swing early and playing it late. It is a moot point whether his position, with Test players available, would be under threat, but with near-on 600 first-class runs he is one of Surrey's leading run-scorers. His fifty arrived in 65 balls before the rains took the edge off Surrey's day.

Ramprakash takes a shine to Hampshire

By BARNEY SPENDER

LORD'S (first day of four: Middlesex won toss; Middlesex have scored 212 for three wickets against Hampshire)

MARK RAMPRAKASH certainly enjoys playing against Hampshire. Two years ago, he battered them around. Lord's to make 163 not out and last season he made 108 at Portsmouth. Yesterday, he stood on the brink of his hat-trick hundred when, bad light and then rain, brought a back foot, he played the swinging ball in textbook fashion, detecting the swing early and playing it late. It is a moot point whether his position, with Test players available, would be under threat, but with near-on 600 first-class runs he is one of Surrey's leading run-scorers. His fifty arrived in 65 balls before the rains took the edge off Surrey's day.

Arriving at the crease in the sixth over, after Paul Weekes had gloved an attempted hook, he immediately looked at ease as the Hampshire attack, lacking any firepower, strove admirably to maintain a decent line and length on a pitch devoid of gremlins.

Jacques Kallis played some exquisite shots through the off-side, but the South African

again showed a youthful impatience when he chased a wide delivery from Stuart Milburn and gave Adrian Aymes his second catch.

Ramprakash was in less generous mood. He has already posted four first-class hundreds this summer and he cruised past the 50 mark for the ninth time in 17 championship innings.

His defence was watertight and the occasional stray delivery was sent to the boundary in a flash, but, thanks to a fine, but not a brilliant, finish on 99 after blocking or leaving 15 deliveries as the light deteriorated rapidly.

Hampshire's perseverance was rewarded when Mike Gatting duffed a Matthew Hayden medium-paced long hop to Robin Smith at mid-on. The breakthrough ended a third-wicket partnership of 128 between Ramprakash and Gatting and it was Hayden's first wicket for the county.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Sarah Teshome, half (with Sandra Penfold) of the reserve pair for the British women's team in the European championship, had a tricky decision on this hand, from the Spring Foursums.

| Dealer South | Love all | IMPs |
|--|---|---|
| ♠ 10 ♥ K J 8 4 ♦ A K ♣ 10 9 8 3 | ♠ K Q 2 ♥ 10 8 6 5 ♦ 9 7 6 8 ♣ 8 8 | ♠ K Q 2 ♥ 10 8 6 5 ♦ 9 7 6 8 ♣ 8 8 |

Contract: Three Spades by South. Lead: King of clubs

One way or another, North-South got to the wrong contract. South might have bid Two Spades over Two Clubs. North (Richard Winter, Teshome's husband) might have bid Two Diamonds over the double, and South might have passed Three Diamonds. Someone might even have bid 3 NT which can't be beaten.

Brian Smith (West) led the king of clubs and switched to a diamond. Teshome won in hand and played ace and another spade. Sitting East I won with the queen and played the five of hearts. What should declarer do?

These are her options. If the king of hearts is with East, it is correct to finesse, and play another trump. Now all the defence can take are two trumps and two clubs. If the king of hearts is with West, the only hope is to rise with the ace

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Early leaders

Early leaders in the Smith & Williamson British Championship at Hove, all of whom are maintaining a 100 per cent score, are as follows: Adams, McShane, Speelman, Plaskett, Kosten, Parker, Martin, Arkel and Sushilkumar.

White: Luke McShane, Black: Graham Lee, British Championship, August 1997

| White Defence | Black Defence |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. e4 | a6 |
| 2. d4 | d5 |
| 3. Nd2 | d4 |
| 4. Nc4 | Nd7 |
| 5. Nf3 | Ng6 |
| 6. Nc5+ | Nd6 |
| 7. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 8. 0-0 | Bc7 |
| 9. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 10. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 11. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 12. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 13. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 14. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 15. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 16. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 17. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 18. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 19. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 20. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 21. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 22. Bc3 | Bd7 |

Diagram of final position

| White | Black |
|---------|-------|
| 1. e4 | a6 |
| 2. d4 | d5 |
| 3. Nd2 | d4 |
| 4. Nc4 | Nd7 |
| 5. Nf3 | Ng6 |
| 6. Nc5+ | Nd6 |
| 7. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 8. 0-0 | Bc7 |
| 9. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 10. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 11. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 12. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 13. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 14. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 15. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 16. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 17. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 18. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 19. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 20. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 21. Bc3 | Bd7 |
| 22. Bc3 | Bd7 |

White resigns

Mind Challenge
To coincide with the first open-to-all Mind Sports Olympiad, The Times will be publishing daily mind challenges for the next one and a half weeks. The Mind Sports Olympiad takes place at the Royal Festival Hall from August 15-24, information on 0171-703 2828.

Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

28 Qc4+ K8
29 Qx4 Black resigns

White: Andrew Ledger, Black: John Speelman, British Championship, August 1997

| White | Black |
|---------|-------|
| 1. N3 | d5 |
| 2. g3 | Bd4 |
| 3. Bg2 | c6 |
| 4. b3 | Nd7 |
| 5. Bb2 | e6 |
| 6. 0-0 | Bd8 |
| 7. c4 | Bb7 |
| 8. Qc2 | Qe7 |
| 9. Nf3 | Bb6 |
| 10. h3 | Bb6 |
| 11. a3 | Bb6 |
| 12. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 13. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 14. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 15. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 16. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 17. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 18. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 19. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 20. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 21. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 22. Qc2 | Bb6 |

Diagram of final position

| White | Black |
|---------|-------|
| 1. N3 | d5 |
| 2. g3 | Bd4 |
| 3. Bg2 | c6 |
| 4. b3 | Nd7 |
| 5. Bb2 | e6 |
| 6. 0-0 | Bd8 |
| 7. c4 | Bb7 |
| 8. Qc2 | Qe7 |
| 9. Nf3 | Bb6 |
| 10. h3 | Bb6 |
| 11. a3 | Bb6 |
| 12. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 13. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 14. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 15. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 16. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 17. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 18. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 19. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 20. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 21. Qc2 | Bb6 |
| 22. Qc2 | Bb6 |

White resigns

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Britannic Assurance county championship

Lancashire v Warwickshire

BLACKPOOL (first day of four: Warwickshire won toss; Lancashire, with seven first-innings wickets in hand, are 55 runs ahead of Warwickshire)

| Warwickshire | Lancashire |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. D.P. Olliver | 1. D.P. Olliver |
| 2. D.P. Olliver | 2. D.P. Olliver |
| 3. D.P. Olliver | 3. D.P. Olliver |
| 4. D.P. Olliver | 4. D.P. Olliver |
| 5. D.P. Olliver | 5. D.P. Olliver |
| 6. D.P. Olliver | 6. D.P. Olliver |
| 7. D.P. Olliver | 7. D.P. Olliver |
| 8. D.P. Olliver | 8. D.P. Olliver |
| 9. D.P. Olliver | 9. D.P. Olliver |
| 10. D.P. Olliver | 10. D.P. Olliver |
| 11. D.P. Olliver | 11. D.P. Olliver |
| 12. D.P. Olliver | 12. D.P. Olliver |
| 13. D.P. Olliver | 13. D.P. Olliver |
| 14. D.P. Olliver | 14. D.P. Olliver |
| 15. D.P. Olliver | 15. D.P. Olliver |
| 16. D.P. Olliver | 16. D.P. Olliver |
| 17. D.P. Olliver | 17. D.P. Olliver |
| 18. D.P. Olliver | 18. D.P. Olliver |
| 19. D.P. Olliver | 19. D.P. Olliver |
| 20. D.P. Olliver | 20. D.P. Olliver |
| 21. D.P. Olliver | 21. D.P. Olliver |
| 22. D.P. Olliver | 22. D.P. Olliver |

Diagram of final position

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Northamptonshire v Worcestershire

NORTHAMPTON (first day of four: Worcestershire won toss; Worcestershire have scored 433 for five wickets against Northamptonshire)

| Worcestershire | Northamptonshire |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. P. Weston | 1. P. Weston |
| 2. P. Weston | 2. P. Weston |
| 3. P. Weston | 3. P. Weston |
| 4. P. Weston | 4. P. Weston |
| 5. P. Weston | 5. P. Weston |
| 6. P. Weston | 6. P. Weston |
| 7. P. Weston | 7. P. Weston |
| 8. P. Weston | 8. P. Weston |
| 9. P. Weston | 9. P. Weston |
| 10. P. Weston | 10. P. Weston |
| 11. P. Weston | 11. P. Weston |
| 12. P. Weston | 12. P. Weston |
| 13. P. Weston | 13. P. Weston |
| 14. P. Weston | 14. P. Weston |
| 15. P. Weston | 15. P. Weston |
| 16. P. Weston | 16. P. Weston |
| 17. P. Weston | 17. P. Weston |
| 18. P. Weston | 18. P. Weston |
| 19. P. Weston | 19. P. Weston |
| 20. P. Weston | 20. P. Weston |
| 21. P. Weston | 21. P. Weston |
| 22. P. Weston | 22. P. Weston |

Diagram of final position

Mind Challenge
To coincide with the first open-to-all Mind Sports Olympiad, The Times will be publishing daily mind challenges for the next one and a half weeks. The Mind Sports Olympiad takes place at the Royal Festival Hall from August 15-24, information on 0171-703 2828.

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Surrey v Durham

THE OVAL (first day of four: Surrey won toss; Surrey have scored 164 for two wickets against Durham)

| SURREY: First innings | |
|---|-----|
| D J Blore | 32 |
| A C Spooner | 34 |
| J D Ratcliffe | 34 |
| J D Ratcliffe not out | 34 |
| J D Ratcliffe not out | 34 |
| Bates (4, 4, 8, 8, w, 2, no 4) | 19 |
| Total (2 wickets, 45.1 overs) | 164 |
| A D Brown, C C Lewis, J N-Batty, M P Bicknell, R M Arvin, Stephen Miah and J E Barmston to bat. | |
| FALL OF WICKETS: 1-63, 2-67 | |
| Surrey: 1-10 (Blore 15-1), Spooner 15-10, Wood 5-6-88-0, Bates 15-19-35-1, Foster 3-27-1, Bailing 2-0-18-0. | |
| DURHAM: S Hutton, J B Lewis, J E Morris, C D Brown, M P Spooner, R E Brown, J Foster, J Bailing, M M Bates, S J E Barmston, J Wood. | |
| Umpires: V A Holder and R Peltner. | |

No play yesterday.

How the county set-up could look

By Alan Lee
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

COUNTY supporters yesterday wrestled with the complexities of the MacLaurin plan to reinvigorate the county championship.

At simply, the proposal involves splitting the 18 counties into three conferences. No fixtures are planned between teams in the same conference and the season will end with cross-conference play-offs, possibly over five days, to decide finishing positions.

It is inevitable that this system, if approved by the counties on September 15, will take time to gain acceptance. Many may regard it as a motivation for shortening the gruelling leap to promotion, and relegation.

The aim is to achieve roughly equal conferences and to retain traditional local rivalries. The counties will be divided into six regional groups of three. These groups will be seeded on the basis of finishing positions this season. The conferences will then be constituted by an equal division of top, second and third-seeded teams.

The regional split is: Midlands, Essex, Surrey, Kent, Hampshire, Sussex, Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Durham.

Teams from the same region will not be bracketed together. Tackling the current championship table as the guide, conferences for next season would look like this:

CONFERENCE A: Gloucestershire, Somerset, Gloucestershire, Kent, Hampshire, Sussex, Middlesex, Lancashire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Yorkshire, Durham.

CONFERENCE B: Gloucestershire, Somerset, Gloucestershire, Kent, Hampshire, Sussex, Middlesex, Lancashire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Yorkshire, Durham.

CONFERENCE C: Somerset, Gloucestershire, Kent, Hampshire, Sussex, Middlesex, Lancashire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Yorkshire, Durham.

CRICKET: LARA'S LANDMARK SURVIVES AS WORLD CUP-WINNERS ENJOY RECORD RETURN

Sri Lanka ascend to new heights

FROM EMMA LEVINE IN COLOMBO

A CACOPHONY of fireworks accompanied the celebrations at the Premadasa Stadium here yesterday when Sri Lanka passed the Test match record score that had stood for nearly 60 years. Amid the lengthening shadows of the final day of the first Test against India, it was the final milestone in a long line of records achieved during a remarkable match and the one on the cake for the World Cup winners, who aspire to be recognised fully as a Test playing nation.

The previous highest Test score of 903 for seven, made by England against Australia in 1938, was in Sri Lanka's sights when they began the day at 581 for one. They finished on 952 for six and the team record was consolation for Sanath Jayasuriya, the Sri Lanka opener, who had been in tears after he was dismissed for 340 — 35 runs short of Brian Lara's record Test score. "I felt a great pressure on me when I came out to bat this morning," he said afterwards, "and obviously I am disappointed — but at least my country has made a great achievement."

After the pitifully small number of people who had witnessed the record-breaking partnership of 548 between Jayasuriya and Roshan Mahanama on the previous day, the stadium gates were thrown open and around 32,000 spectators poured in to create a carnival atmosphere. They had come to experience the moment when they could say "bye, bye Lara", but they were to be disappointed.

When the Sri Lanka pair resumed their innings, they continued the trend that had set during the previous day's play, sending perfect square cuts and straight drives to the boundary. They looked so fresh that it was hard to believe that they had been batting for more than two days in the Sri Lankan sun.

India were bewitched, but somehow managed to break the first day's trapped leg before by Kumble with the javelin at 615 and the partnership at 576. As so often seems to happen,

Showpiece is no gift for Greeks

It should be the classic case of athletics "coming home". The world championships of track and field were awarded to Athens, Greece, where, for thousands of years, the ancient nurtured sport in its cradle. Yet as the world championships opened, in a massive new stadium, nobody, it seems, had bothered to tell the Greek public that they were supposed to be part of the action. Rows of empty seats caused heads to be shaken and may have dealt a fatal blow to Greek prospects of hosting the Olympic Games of 2004.

In a contest that seems to have been as bitter and exciting as anything on the track, the Greek organisers and the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) have taken turns at blaming each other for the pathetic turnout. The IAAF declared itself "flabbergasted" that so few showed up for the opening ceremony last Saturday — and when one of the showpiece events of the championships, the 100 metres final, was won by Maurice Greene, the stadium appeared to be only half-full. The word in Athens is that the organisers are not to



blame. The Greeks see the villain as an Italian, Primo Nebiolo, the president of the IAAF. Vangelis Savranis, the director-general of Athens '97, said angrily: "We asked the IAAF to move the championships to the end of the month when the stadium would be full. They didn't listen."

In the first four days of the championships, the daily average sales of tickets has been fewer than 24,000. The capacity of the stadium is 85,000 and the organisers have been working flat out to dream up gimmicks to pull in a crowd.

The problem is that half the population of Athens is on summer holiday and the sea and sand have proved a more popular lure than the track. This means not just empty seats but empty tills, and Greek newspapers have been predicting a deficit of more than £2 million on the championships.

The final cost to Athens could be many millions and the Greek Athletic Federation made things worse by agreeing that the IAAF need not contribute to the cost, as it has done in the past.

These championships are

seen as the final card in Athens' bid to secure the 2004 Olympics and there are about 40 International Olympic Committee visitors scrutinising from the stands.

Many believe that what is really going on in Athens this week is a struggle between the Greeks and the Romans for who gets the Olympic Games. Athens and Rome are bidding against Cape Town, Buenos Aires and Stockholm and the decision will be taken in Lausanne on September 5.

Recent history makes one wonder if anyone really wants the hassle and expense of big, overblown championships like these anyway. There are always too many events with too many competitors and the whole thing is spread over too many days.

Yet every time that such games are staged, the organisers boast that they are better and bigger. In Athens, we are told, there are athletes from a record 200 countries, making these championships the best-attended sports competition, in terms of competitors, in history. There are 1,225 men and 732 women competing.

More countries than before are watching the action on television, with 212 countries taking footage. The IAAF boasts that 3.3 billion will watch these championships on television.

However, the Athenians are well aware that Atlanta is still smarting after the wounding experience of staging the Olympics last summer and, despite all Nebiolo's enthusiasm, there is considerable hostility to the Games in Rome. One anti-Games lobby group is so well organised and funded that it has published a book, in English and Italian, entitled *10 Good Reasons to say No to the 2004 Olympics in Rome*. Traffic, corruption, pollution and above all the crippling long-term costs are all invoked by opponents of the Roman bid.

JOHN BRYANT

Send in the clones for race to glory

FROM ROB HUGHES IN ATHENS

THE Scottish laboratory technicians reckon that they are ahead in the art of cloning mammals, in sheep if not man. Africa, however, has been at it for decades, producing track runners who are virtual blood brothers, winners of gold medals at world and Olympic championships as if it were birthright. Again, yesterday, the Kenyans reminded us of this.

In successive races in the Olympic Stadium, Wilson Kipketer strode gracefully to victory in the 800 metres semi-final — and then Wilson

to overhaul Moses Kiptanui, three times the world champion, in the kick for the line. Bernard Barmasai, another Kenyan, took the bronze.

That will not be an end to this brotherhood. The Kipketer who breezes through 800 metres has become the only man to equal Sebastian Coe's world record of 1min 41.73sec. About 16 years separated Coe's glide to the record in Florence and Kipketer matching it in Stockholm.

By Friday, even Coe anticipates that Kipketer could eclipse the time. What a pity that we cannot use a time machine to pit this Kenyan against Coe and settle to what would be the 800 metres of all.

Officially, Kipketer, of 800 metres, is no longer Kenyan — he is resident in Denmark and is now qualified to wear the red of his adopted homeland. Kenya, however, will not let him go. Peter Njenga, a correspondent for the *Nation Daily* in Kenya, said: "Kipketer may be a Dane, but Kenyans could not care less. He is one of them, blood runs deep in the veins and no medal would be more valued and celebrated in Kenya than the 800 metres gold."

Of course, assumes he wins it on Friday, for maintaining the brotherhood, there is another Kenyan, Patrick Kionochi, the winner of the other 800 metres semi-final yesterday, who, despite losing a shoe at the bell, had the balance, courage and confidence to take the race.

Kipketer, the adopted Dane,



Kipketer's 800 metres rivals struggle to match the elegant world record-holder

won his 800 metres semi-final precisely as he had won the heat, settling back in last place, coming off the bend and easing past the entire field. He runs in a fashion that makes the phrase "grace under pressure" almost redundant. Who knows what potential is in him? Who can tell how he has the audacity and the cunning to sit back there and press the button to his turbo boost?

When I am running alone, in the front," he said, "it's missing something." Enough said — and it is all you get anyway from the man Denmark has dubbed the Garbo

of the track. In that acceleration to the finish, he was playing with world-class competitors: he was running erect, the eyes alert, the head still, until, with the merest glance to his right, he saw no danger and he soothed his bantamweight body home in first place.

His namesake had to do much more. He was intent on stalking Kiptanui, who had a slight sore throat yesterday — or so he said — and that was enough for Kipketer Mark II to succeed him. Kiptanui had his turn, Kipketer, 23, was nudging him aside and Kiptanui, all of 27, was pushed

backwards into history. The name Kipketer means "born on the verandah". No Kenyans believe in sitting on the fence, they are perpetuating an astonishing dynasty. The German Democratic Republic has gone, the corruption of their regime in sport brought down the Berlin Wall. The Chinese women created dubious records in running, but their impact was disbanded with the infamous Ma's Army. The only things that keep the African domination running are as old as history: human potential and the desire to step out of poverty.

Compensation for Moroccan

HICHAM EL GUERROUJ, who was captivated by watching the 5,000 metres victory of his fellow Moroccan, Said Aouita, at the 1994 Olympics, found consolation yesterday for his misfortune in the 1,500 metres at the Atlanta Games last year by winning over that distance at the world championships (David Powell writes).

For El Guerrouj, it represented the continuation of an extraordinary year. During the indoor season, he became the first man for 59 years to hold both the indoor mile and 1,500 metres world records, setting them only ten days apart. So began the process of putting behind him the distress of Atlanta, where he was

tripped in the final when it seemed he was ready to end Noureddine Morceli's five-year reign as world No 1. He trailed in a despondent twelfth, having been tripped just before the bell.

Yesterday, he took control with 600 metres to go, injecting a sudden burst of speed that opened a two-metre lead on Morceli. On the back straight of the final lap, Morceli closed slightly, but again El Guerrouj changed gear, going on to win in 3min 55.85sec.

Morceli paid the price for chasing El Guerrouj and was passed first by Fernán Cacho and, shortly before the line, Reyes Estevez. While Spain celebrated winning silver and

bronze medals, Morceli finished fourth.

At the 1992 world junior championships, El Guerrouj had taken the 5,000 metres bronze medal behind Haile Gebrselassie, from Ethiopia, yesterday's winner of the 10,000 metres. With two laps to go, six athletes remained in contention, but Gebrselassie made a surprise attack 570 metres from home. Such a burst of speed has rarely, if ever, been seen in a 10,000 metres and by the bell his lead was 15 metres. Gebrselassie won in 27min 24.88sec. Paul Tergat, from Kenya, who was second, threw angry looks after crossing the line, knowing that he had been caught completely by surprise.

An entertaining departure

Airport
BBC1, 8.00pm (except Scotland)

More than nine million people have been tuning in to this anthology of tales from Heathrow and it is not difficult to understand why. Part of the appeal is watching other people going through such horrors as overcrowded lounges and delayed flights. But what hooks an audience is the soap opera play of regular characters and a raft of scintillating stories. A star of the series is Jeremy, the plucky, genial and very British supervisor of the Russian airline Aeroflot. A running joke is that Jeremy keeps losing passengers. And so it is tonight, except that 25 meals have gone missing as well as nine Russian schoolchildren. But credit to Jeremy, he does not once lose his cool. We also renew the acquaintance of Anita from the VIP Suite, and Michele, the cheery trouble-shooter of Terminal Three.

How Buildings Learn
BBC2, 8.00pm

Stewart Brand calls the penultimate programme of his stimulating series *The Romance of Maintenance* but he is being ironic. Maintaining buildings is not romantic. It means expense and hassle and there is nothing to show at the end. Yet, as Brand says, no maintenance can mean no building. He is just talking about repairing leaks or tacking dry rot, but how such things can be avoided in the first place. His pet hate is the flat roof. He claims, perhaps with exaggeration, that flat roofs always let in water. On the positive side he urges the use of brick and wood, which age well and need little upkeep. To underline the point he shows us examples of 300-year-old weatherboarding in New England and bricks in the Italian town of Lucre which go back to Roman times.

Secrets of the Gobi Desert
Channel 4, 9.00pm

Bill Patterson, who is also the voice-over for *Airport*, narrates a tale of fossil hunting in the Mongolian desert. It is a rich field, particularly for the remains of dinosaurs. The film follows an expedition led by Mike Novacek and Mark Norrell from the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Novacek and Norrell are following in



Jeremy searches for passengers (BBC1)

the tyre tracks of a fellow-countryman, Roy Chapman Andrews. He was a flamboyant explorer and self-publicist whose travels in the 1920s and 1930s resulted in flickering black and white film. The Communists put paid to Andrews, and for 65 years the fossil fields became forbidden territory. Even allowing for the compression which a television film imposes, the Novacek-Norrell team makes an impressive number of finds. They suggest that dinosaurs lived not on lizards, as you might expect, but birds.

BBC Proms 97
BBC1, 10.20pm

The first of the season's Proms to be shown on BBC1 features *The Gondoliers*. It is some years since Gilbert and Sullivan were represented at the Proms but with Lennon and Macartney included for the first time it was logical to bring back their Victorian forebears. A concert performance may not make a full theatrical staging, but with G and S the songs are the thing and it does not need elaborate sets and costumes to bring out the catchy melodies and witty lyrics. A tale of baby-swapping, kidnapping and mistaken identity, *The Gondoliers* was the pair's last important collaboration and played before Queen Victoria. Tonight's cast has Jamie McDougall and Jason Howard in the title roles, with Richard Stuart as the Duke of Plaza-Toro and Donald Maxwell as Don Alhambra. Peter Waymouth

RADIO CHOICE

Going Back
Radio 4, 7.20pm

Hitler reckoned without Pat Bing, Freda James and Connie Callum. He believed the Nazis' Enigma code was unbreakable. Pat, Freda and Connie, plus some 10,000 others, were to give him a nasty shock. Sworn to secrecy and operating as independent units in Bletchley Park, Buckinghamshire — they never met their team-mates — they broke the Germans' naval codes, and down the line to Churchill's war cabinet bunker in London went the vital information without which the Second World War could have dragged on for years. *Going Back* tells what happened when, over 50 years later, Pat, Freda and Connie returned to Bletchley's huts, swapped memories and — an Enigma variation — gossip of a personal nature.

RADIO 1

7.00am Mark Radcliffe 9.00 Mark Goodier 11.30 Radio 1 Breakfast 12.30pm Newsweek 12.45 On the Edge 1.30pm John Peel 2.00pm News 2.15pm News 2.30pm News 2.45pm News 3.00pm News 3.15pm News 3.30pm News 3.45pm News 4.00pm News 4.15pm News 4.30pm News 4.45pm News 5.00pm News 5.15pm News 5.30pm News 5.45pm News 6.00pm News 6.15pm News 6.30pm News 6.45pm News 7.00pm News 7.15pm News 7.30pm News 7.45pm News 8.00pm News 8.15pm News 8.30pm News 8.45pm News 9.00pm News 9.15pm News 9.30pm News 9.45pm News 10.00pm News 10.15pm News 10.30pm News 10.45pm News 11.00pm News 11.15pm News 11.30pm News 11.45pm News 12.00pm News 12.15pm News 12.30pm News 12.45pm News 1.00pm News 1.15pm News 1.30pm News 1.45pm News 2.00pm News 2.15pm News 2.30pm News 2.45pm News 3.00pm News 3.15pm News 3.30pm News 3.45pm News 4.00pm News 4.15pm News 4.30pm News 4.45pm News 5.00pm News 5.15pm News 5.30pm News 5.45pm News 6.00pm News 6.15pm News 6.30pm News 6.45pm News 7.00pm News 7.15pm News 7.30pm News 7.45pm News 8.00pm 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| Alliance & Leicester Prime 90 Share (90 Day) | 4.40%††† | 5.10% | 5.80% | 5.85% | 5.90% | 6.15% |
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The next famous McCartney

A pale, slim young woman looks out from the cool cream and mahogany interior of the air-conditioned building on to the packed, steamy streets of lunch-time Soho.

"Oh, I don't like all those crowds," she says. "Really freak me out, they do. Do you mind if we don't go out after all?"

She seems fearful of the outside, yet is not entirely comfortable in these stylish confines either. Being Heather McCartney, you imagine she could take both in her stride. After all, the man she calls "my dad" owns the building. And she did choose this, the headquarters of Paul McCartney's company MPL, to talk for the first time about her own work as a potter.

Without any publicity fanfare she has, it appears, been doing rather well. Her vases are on sale in Selfridges. There have been exhibitions in New York and Phoenix, Arizona, and more are planned for Tokyo, Paris and Sydney. The British Council in Los Angeles has selected her to head a showcase launch, to be opened by Princess Anne in October. Wedgwood has hailed her as "one of Britain's most exciting new talents".

Such recognition would be gratifying for anyone, but Heather is particularly eager to stress just how welcome it is. "It's very important for me. Important for my own individuality, for what I need for myself in the world. I've always felt I had to be something for other people. And that led to trouble because it wasn't me I was doing it for. So it took me a long time to get to the point where I am now."

This is said with a vibrating, nervous intensity. As she looks out of the window again, she says, "This isn't my scene at all. I'm used to my own little world," and shivers with distaste.

"London and a lot of people make me feel insecure. I'm a country person, a roll-your-own kind of girl. I live alone in the countryside with my Airedale puppy, my two cats, my garden — where I grow all my own organic vegetables — and my pots. My workshop is two miles down the road. Everything in my environment is recycled."

"All I need in order to work is a lump of clay. I only use the best, pure Staffordshire, a kiln

She's made it in her own right now, but Heather McCartney knows all the drawbacks of being a superstar's daughter. Interview by Noreen Taylor



A young Heather at Linda and Paul McCartney's wedding in London in 1969

and some water. So when you drink from one of my cups you are drinking in the earth.

"I work in silence. I can't say that music plays a big part in my life any more. There aren't any new bands around like the Clash, Led Zeppelin or my dad's music."

"And I'm really not into hard-core girl bands with tattoos selling soul who allow themselves to be backed by big drink companies. We won't say who we mean, will we,

Geoff?" she calls to the MPL press man.

"No, there's no man in my life. Can't imagine I'd meet one who fits in with me. And I'm not the sort who can adapt. I mean, that's what women do, isn't it? They fit into a man's life. People have a hard time working me out. What did you expect?"

A touch of the Tamara Airheads, I suggest. Nothing like you are. "Thank you, oh, thank you," she rocks on her

chair. "Means a lot to me, you saying that."

She is wearing cowboy boots, silver rings and bracelets bought in Arizona, and the kind of filmy dress her sister Stella has made her name designing. "This isn't one of Stella's dresses. A kind of barrier arrangement between us would be good. My pots for her clothes. Yeah, gotta get that one sorted," she laughs.

Her accent, speech patterns and rock argot are pure St-

ties, punctuated by the odd northern vowel. She gives the impression of being troubled. Or is that just a legacy of past troubles? Eight years ago, Heather admitted herself to a Sussex clinic seeking treatment for an emotional disorder brought on by what was described at the time as a personality identity crisis.

"I'm fine now, sorted myself, had to empty what was inside my head and focus on a higher energy. I was on a quest to find my own individuality. It's not something you can go into a shop and ask for, and I needed to know. Living up to other people's expectations can cause such stresses. You wonder, 'Am I doing this for me or because it's expected of me?'"

"As a child, I was always the quiet one sitting in the corner, questioning everything. When I toured with my parents I'd be aware that there were some people who could just pick up the phone and demand a backstage pass, while others, the kids, queued all night for tickets. It was their energy that fired me, interested me."

Heather, 34, the daughter of Paul's wife, Linda, and her first husband, the American geologist Melville See, was born in Arizona and brought up in England. When she was five her mother met and married Paul, who subsequently adopted Heather.

Paul and Linda then had three children of their own, all of whom have found success in their various niches. Mary, 27, has followed her mother into photography and has already enjoyed the distinction of having a picture accepted by the National Portrait Gallery.

'Do they think I just ring home for £10,000 each week?'

Stella, 24, is now based in Paris as head designer of Chloé, and James, 20, has made his debut as lead guitarist on his father's latest album, *Flaming Pie*.

Heather's unworried lack of cynicism doesn't mean she hasn't been fitted with that essential protective device that keeps her on the alert when questions touch on family matters, although she does confirm that her mother has made a full recovery from breast cancer.

"She's all right now," she says. "Like a plague, isn't it? Affects everyone in the family."

Linda is resuming her role as high priestess of the veggie burger. She has launched her own meatless meals company and published a series of best-selling cookbooks. Before that, there was a career as a rock photographer, which spawned a series of glossy coffee-table studies of rock icons.

And what greater rock icon is there than former Beatle Paul, one of the world's most famous men? "Oh, I'm very proud of my folks," Heather says. "They're all exceptionally talented people. My brother, James, is a very special person, a gentle soul, and a brilliant guitarist. He's going to have problems, like I have."

"Being a McCartney can be a blessing. I mean, you wouldn't be sitting here talk-



Cup winner: Heather's pottery has earned kudos from the likes of Wedgwood

ing to me if I came from an ordinary family. On the other hand, there are all those expectations, those standards."

"I thought once of changing my name, but that would have been arrogant after what my parents have done for me, being my patrons and everything. Great names have been handed down to generations before, so I guess we just have to be careful and treat it with respect."

"The great burden that used to screw me up, make me insecure, was people's reaction to my name. I mean, they'd hear Heather, and nothing. Then someone would say McCartney and really

emphasise it and I'd just watch their faces change."

"I mean, what do they think's going on? That I've got it made? That I just ring home for the next £10,000 once a week? Well, I've got what I've got and I have to live within my own budget."

I washed up in kitchens, worked in a pub. We were sent to state schools, so it's all very real in our family. Course, my folks would help me out if I was in real trouble. From what I can gather, even ordinary, working-class people do that anyway, give their children their last fiver."

Heather admits her own exploits have tested her parents' faith. "Seven years ago, I spent a year in Arizona and Mexico, staying with relatives. I met these amazing young people living in the streets, supporting themselves — by stringing beads and playing the flute. They had nothing, and I really respected their values. They were happy even though they had nothing."

Through them, I met what I call the First Nation people of America, the Tarahumara and Huichol people. They've become my major project, because their culture is in danger of extinction. I lived with them, learnt from them, got inspired by their pottery, their vulnerability. They're being bulldozed out of their lands. Now I want to do whatever's possible to save them, to help them survive the modern world."

"I'm really serious about the Huichol tribes. I'm not on some whim, it's not as though I'm going through this week's craze. People might have a certain picture of me because of my name, would not imagine some of the heavy situations I got out of in Mexico. Lord knows how I made it out in one piece. I guess I owe my common sense to my parents. They're the people who put me on the right road, otherwise I could have ended up in God knows where."

"I mean, in Mexico it wasn't a case of ringing my parents and asking for an air ticket. I know people find that hard to believe, but I made it through without once picking up a phone and asking my folks to help me out."

Clearly, Heather has inherited Linda's evangelistic fervor. "Hurling through a flowery cotton bag, she announces she wants to read from the journal she kept during her Mexican travels."

"Won't take long," she insists. "I just want you to hear some of the things I wrote down. This will explain my interest in pagan ways and nature's cycles."

Caring desperately that I honour her discovery of these native Americans, and her commitment to them, she leans across to plead: "They are my project. Do you understand? They're standing on the edge of extinction and it's something I found out on my own. It's what I did by myself."

She pauses. "You listened to me. I'm so grateful."



Heather, aged 10, with Stella, one, and Mary, three

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'CJD could become a disaster of biblical proportions'

Mandy Minto, the former European judo champion, was only 37 when she died eight months after showing the first signs of what could be new-style Creutzfeldt-Jakob's disease (CJD).

The diagnosis is still to be confirmed: this can only be achieved with certainty after tests have been carried out on brain tissue, which has to be collected either at the post-mortem or obtained by surgical biopsy during life. Although the tests are comparatively straightforward, any brain biopsy carries with it a risk and is not readily undertaken.

The relatively low number of cases of new-style CJD, which is the type of the disease related to BSE in cattle, have resulted in a great sense of relief. People are able, once more, to enjoy their T-bone steaks and osso buco without fear that every mouthful could give them a disease that would leave them demented and paralysed.

At last the Government, British farmers and veterinarians have the BSE epidemic under control and the beef-eaters are probably right that it is now safe to eat British beef, and beef products. It would, however, be wrong for doctors and the general public to discount the possibility of a major epidemic of new-style CJD. Nobody will know for many years, probably at least ten, how many people have been affected by eating infected beef. This is one of only several questions that time alone will answer.

Evidence has, however, been garnered from the epidemic of kuru, another form of CJD, which wreaked havoc in New Guinea as the result of cannibalism. Research in New Guinea showed that the incubation period was about 12 years. Even last year, one person died from kuru, although cannibalism has been outlawed for nearly 50 years.

In the new-style CJD found in Britain, the infecting prion would, unlike in New Guinea, have to cross the species barrier from cow to human. Evidence suggests that this would double the incubation period and we are therefore looking at an interval of 20 to 30 years.

If anyone were in a position to supply the answer to the mysteries of BSE and CJD, it would be Professor John Collinge, Professor of Neurogenetics at Imperial College, London, and St Mary's Hospital, the Wellcome Research Fellow at St Mary's and a consultant neurologist to the hospital. St Mary's has the only specialist unit in the world investigating CJD. Professor Collinge is in charge.

Professor Collinge says: "I am now coming round to the view that doctors working in this field have to say what they think, even though this may give rise to anxieties which later turn out to be groundless. We have a heavy weight of responsibility to warn, but we have to be aware that what we say may be scary and could do irreparable economic damage. But it can no longer be denied that it is possible, even likely, that we may have to face an epidemic."

"It is impossible to predict the size of the epidemic — it may only involve hundreds, but it could be Europe-wide and become a disaster of biblical proportions. We have to face the possibility of a disaster with tens of thousands of cases. We just don't know if this will happen, but what is certain is that we cannot afford to wait and see. We have to do something, right now. We have to find the answers, not only to the questions of the nature of the disease, but to find a way to develop an effective treatment."

"Fortunately, it seems that this could be possible. Therapy is not 'just around the corner' but we know how to target our research and, if it is given priority, we might have a treatment within ten years."

"Everybody has prion protein, it is a normal constituent of the brain. There are normal and abnormal forms of this protein: CJD develops if there is an inter-reaction of the normal and abnormal prion protein. We need to develop a drug to prevent this inter-reaction and there is every



Any conspiracy of silence in the search for a cure for CJD will cost lives, says Dr Thomas Stuttford

likelihood that we will be able to."

Among the clinical problems to be solved is the degree of vulnerability in children. Are children at special risk and is their apparently short incubation period an indication of this increased hazard? Nobody knows the answer, but it seems possible that because children's central nervous system is growing rapidly, they make more prion protein, and this may increase their sensitivity to the infecting agent.

Professor Collinge eats beef himself, and is confident that most of the infected material in British beef has now been removed. In any event, at his age, he would already have been infected. "At the time when the BSE epidemic was at its height, I was a junior doctor and eating junk hospital foods, including burgers. The hospital, or other cooking, would not have destroyed any prions responsible for CJD, and as I must have then been confronted by them, it would be illogical to avoid beef now."

Professor Collinge has no children, but says that if he had, he would be chary about giving them beef or beef products. The official line is that there is no evidence that children are at special risk, but as he explains: "This only offers limited reassurance. It means that there is an absence of proven evidence that children are at particular risk, rather than there is evidence of an absence of risk."

Professor Collinge is relieved that central nervous system tissue is now removed from the food chain and is amazed that it was imported from countries with BSE so long after it had been banned in Britain. "It was easy to avoid bovine brains, but to obtain the meat from around the spine, the cattle's vertebrae were crunched up and a pink paste of meat was produced. There was no sense in continuing to import beef products from countries in which BSE is now being diagnosed increasingly often."

It is not only the brain and the central nervous system that are rich sources of the BSE prion: research at St Mary's has confirmed that the lymphatic system also has an abundant supply of prions capable of causing CJD. The tonsils are part of the lymphatic system, and in an infected animal these, too, contain CJD-producing prion proteins. There is now real concern in case there are numerous people incubating new-style CJD, and if there are, whether their blood could carry the infective material. Tests are being devised to check this.

One unsolved problem of BSE in cattle is why the lymphatic tissue of the calf's small gut is infectious, long before either its spleen or brain is capable of transmitting BSE. Fortunately, calves' guts are now removed from the human food chain, and do not even go into the humblest pie.

There are three distinct types of CJD. The inherited form accounts for 15 per cent of cases. This occurs all over the world. In Britain, there are now at least 30 families affected. It is inherited as an autosomal dominant characteristic, so that 50 per cent of those who have a parent who has the disease will develop the full-blown disease. This form usually strikes in the 40s and 50s.

The second form of CJD is the most common. These are the sporadic cases, which are not inherited, although research at St Mary's has found that there are genetic markers, showing whether a person is at risk.

barrier is also related to the beef-eaters' genetic inheritance. Another important question is whether the risk for beef-eaters is a greater or lower risk than a huge beef-eater who, from time to time, may have had an enormous amount of cheap burgers or rissoles.

The doubts and fears Professor Collinge is now posing publicly are those which have been raised about banned closed doors in medical centres, shops and government offices for more than ten years. Political and commercial considerations have stifled any public debate more than traditional scientific rectitude.

If Professor Collinge is right, and there is still the risk of an epidemic, but hope of an effective treatment, any conspiracy of silence will cost lives.



Professor John Collinge: "Doctors in this field have to say what they think. We have a heavy weight of responsibility to warn."

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Between a rock and a hard place

Michael Gove on the futility of Ulster peace negotiations

Peace processes are supposed to be uphill struggles. Those involved in the process accept the journey from the trenches to the sunlit uplands has its inevitable hazards and slippages. What they will not accept is that their struggle is Sisyphean.

Since the Seventies, British ministers in Ulster have shown no more signs of learning from experience than the Greek condemned forever to shove a boulder up the steepest of gradients, only to have it roll back just as the summit came within sight. In Northern Ireland the same policy is pushed again, and again, but after all the honest effort the thing collapses, bringing violence in its wake, and we are back where we started.

It is in that sense that Mr Mowlam's meeting with Gerry Adams yesterday was genuinely historic. It was not a breakthrough to a new era, but an eerie reiteration of policies past — history was not made, but re-enacted. The twin follies to which both parties have subscribed still bewitch today.

The first flawed presumption is that negotiations can conjure away differences. Successive Secretaries of State have tried to find a mythical "centre-ground" in Ulster by persuading peoples with irreconcilable goals that they can both be satisfied. If only the parties could be persuaded to talk, the Government implores like Susie Orbach dealing with a recalcitrant couple, then we could sort this thing out.

The second flawed presumption is that concessions to armed force can persuade those armed to stop using force. Minister after minister has shaped Government policy to meet Sinn Féin needs.

The strategy is driven by the hope that militant republicans will be persuaded they can achieve more by talking than by killing. But all this attention, and adoption of policy, for a party with the support of one-eighth of Ulster's adults only reinforces the impression that the most persuasive advocates are the ones with Armalites.

That the same policies should guide governments for nearly 30 years, in defiance of logic and with a settlement no nearer, is difficult to comprehend. What makes it difficult to forgive is that their failure was prophesied, and the reasons for the failure analysed, 22 years ago.

T. E. Uley's *Lessons of Ulster*, published in 1975 and reissued this month, is a brilliant survey of British Government policy towards Northern Ireland. For the reader, the freshness of Uley's prose is a treat, for the citizen the freshness of his argument is a tragedy.

Uley realised a generation ago that no peace worth the name could be secured by attempting to broker a deal between two incompatible aspirations and no peace would come by trying to moderate extremists through granting them concessions. Long before Mr Mowlam became Ulster's

latest Sisyphus the province had a Sybil who could foresee her failure.

Peter Uley was one of the finest Tory polemicists of the Seventies and Eighties. His rigour in thought was matched by an elegance of expression and generosity of manner which won him admirers in politics, but sadly not the influence over his course which was his due. His journalism was produced not only in defiance of Establishment opposition but also his own blindness, both of which he bore with stoical grace.

Writing in *The Times* in 1988, shortly before his death, Uley addressed himself to the Pollyannas and Panglosses who had chided him for his negativity, the men who still ask that we should indulge their pretensions and "give peace a chance".

"During all these years, I and others like me have been very discouraging to all initiatives and I have continually been told I am a cynic who should give them 'a fair chance', and that in spite of the fact I believed on all occasions that to give them such a chance would produce appalling consequences. The predictions have happened and happened."

When I have presumptuously pointed this out, I have been told I am judging 'with hindsight'. However, my shoulders, metaphorically speaking are broad, and it would seem a pity to interrupt the rhythm of the dance.

After another decade of dancing around the truth it is still just as difficult for critics to be out of step. It is as heretical now to question the assumptions of the peace process as it was then to doubt the wisdom of the latest constitutional "initiative".

It appears all the more perverse to predict the worst when Ulster enjoys a sort of peace thanks to the IRA ceasefire. But the last ceasefire was not a step on the road to an honourable settlement, simply a tactical suspension. The trigger, having administered punch, asked for the wallet and when the fumbling went on for too long the blows started again. Why should we believe that this time will be different?

While it is a mercy that republican terrorists are not currently pursuing their murder campaign, there is still no reason to believe that the armed struggle will not be resumed if Sinn Féin does not get what it wants from talks. And what Sinn Féin wants — the end of the Union — cannot be given by a Government committed to uphold the democratic wishes of the greater number in Ulster.

Perhaps one day a Government will bend all its efforts to defending that democratic majority's clearly expressed wishes and treat Northern Ireland as fully part of the United Kingdom. As Uley wrote, in 1975: "By bloody and unnecessary experiments almost all alternatives to a sane policy have been exhausted." And yet, exhausted, still they push.



Cricket's decline and fall

If the Roman Empire failed its final test, what chance has Lord's?

Sixty years ago we used to go as a family in August to watch the cricket at Weston-super-Mare. Quite often it rained: I can recall the feeling of growing despair as it became certain that the outing would have to be cancelled. In 1934 my father had bought a second-hand open green Lagonda, itself a Depression car which had been built in 1929 but sold to some Bristol merchant only in 1932.

We would put our belongings into the boot, including deckchairs in case all the chairs at the ground had been taken; we would carry a picnic lunch, mainly of ham sandwiches, and a Thermos flask of coffee. We would take out three pairs of family binoculars, one of them a German sniper's field-grey binoculars, a First World War souvenir, which gave a disturbingly sharp picture of a narrowly focused scene. My father used to wear a Panama hat; my sisters and I wore children's soft white sunhats such as have recently become fashionable for some Australian slip fitters.

The Somerset county cricket team in those years before the war was a very fair county side; it usually ended in the middle of the championship, and had some England players including J.C. "Farmer" White, whose slow bowling puzzled the Australians. He took 13 wickets for 250 runs in 124.5 overs in the Adelaide Test of February, 1929; Wally Hammond made a century in each innings, but all of us Somerset supporters believed that it was J.C. White who had won the match. Somerset in the 1930s had the medium-fast bowling pair of Arthur Wellard and Bill Andrews, and that forceful but melancholy young batsman Harold Gimblett; his highest score for England was only 67 not out but he broke county records with some frequency, both for speed of scoring and for high scores.

Gimblett was a cricketer of moods: as an opening batsman he would sometimes plod about gloomily for a quarter of an hour until there was an inevitable snick to the slips or the wicket-keeper but sometimes he would hook the first ball for six and play the first over as though he had already made a century or more.

We saw great batsmen from other counties and other countries playing against Somerset. I saw Hammond make more than one century at the Bristol ground, where Gloucester-

shire usually won the local derby. I saw Paynter and Washbrook put on an 100 opening partnership, probably before lunch, at Weston itself. I saw Donald Bradman make a double century at Taunton. I shall always be grateful to the Somerset players of those years, who are now almost all dead, for filling a child's memory and imagination with such vivid play. I can still see the scene when Kent's Frank Woolley was bowling to Arthur Wellard at Wells; Wellard, for the second time in his career, hit five sixes in an over and was dropped on the boundary off the last ball.

Is it the same nowadays? Up to a point, it probably is. I'm sure that 10-year-old boys still go back home after one-day matches thrilled by the run chase at the end. It is extraordinary how often in limited-over cricket the game does end with a couple of overs left, eight wickets down and 15 runs to get. That, at least as far as excitement is concerned, is the perfect end to a game, and it is one which the four-day match very seldom produces.

Yet in other ways cricket is not the same. In the 1930s there was no television; one saw cricket live or one did not see it at all. There were radio broadcasts of Test matches, given by Howard Marshall for the BBC when the Test matches were in England, and by an anonymous Australian commentator on Radio Luxembourg when they were in Australia. As children, we used to get up early to listen to the last hour of the Australian series of 1936-37, when England won the first two Tests but Australia won the last three and took the Ashes.

These broadcasts were sponsored by a cigarette company. Their jingle was: "Mine's a Minor, the ten score for intelligent folk. Oh why won't you try one of mine?" No television, no helmets, no bodyline bowling after Douglas Jardine's disgraceful Australian tour of 1932-33, no sledging, no white noses, no one-day matches, no covered pitches, far more opportunity for slow bowlers in first-class cricket; these were some of the differences

between the county cricket of the 1930s and county cricket now. There were also the amateurs, many of them schoolmasters who were available to play county cricket only in August. Another difference was that the grounds were full. Certainly at the Weston festival, one could not rely on getting a seat unless one turned up at least half an hour before the match, and the same was true at Taunton. Now the grounds are often full for the one-day game, but are more often half or almost wholly empty for four-day county matches.

What we did not realise in the 1930s was how brief the classic period of English cricket would prove to be. However far back one tries to push the starting point of this classic period, one cannot really date it before 1880. That

was the year of the first Test match played in England, at the Oval, and the first Test appearance of W.G. Grace, who scored 152 in England's first innings. The year 1890 is not all that long ago; in terms of British experience it belongs to modern history.

Lord MacLaurin's report which was published this week proposes a post-classical structure for English cricket. It is rightly based on the recognition that the classical period is over. Classical cricket has been killed by many of the different changes of modern life. The cricket of the 1990s no more resembles that of the 1950s than Parliament in the 1990s resembles Parliament in the 1950s. One can no more imagine Peter May wearing Disneyland pyjamas to caper about under the spotlights than one can imagine Winston Churchill, as Leader of the Opposition, wearing a baseball cap with his own name on it and plunging down a theme park waterslide.

The modern age is in many ways preferable to the old. I do not myself feel nostalgic for the Nissen huts, buzz-bombs and occasional whale steaks of my adolescent years; but it was certainly different. The virtues of a long attention span, a scholarly approach to life and a sense of

harmony are not high among the values of our age.

No doubt Lord MacLaurin is right: if first-class cricket is to survive, it must attract a large audience. His scheme, with its emphasis on the one-day game and exciting play-offs, seems quite likely to do that. Newspapers themselves stay with a declining audience at their peril; the *Morning Post* was the leading newspaper for classified advertisements for butlers; the *Daily Herald* in its last years was the leading paper in which to run a baked-bean campaign directed at old age pensioners in the North East; where are they now? "Where's Troy and where's the Maypole in the Strand?" Cricket has to adapt to the new audience or die, and I do not want cricket to die — nor for that matter would I wish to see the demise of the Tory party, which faces rather similar problems.

Yet one-day matches, under floodlights or by daylight, in pyjamas or white flannels, is not the same as the classic game of cricket, and does not produce all the classic skills. One-day cricket is halfway to baseball, a very good game, but one of short-term movement aimed at excitement and quick results.

Part of the reason why Australia so often beats England in Test matches is no doubt that the Australian side is made up of Australians; they live more in the sun, are usually fitter and come from a more competitive culture. But part of the reason is that they have concentrated less on the limited skills of the one-day game. We nowadays usually do win the one-day matches, but they usually win the Test matches, and it is still the Ashes which have the prestige.

I doubt if Lord MacLaurin's remedies can save the classic quality of English cricket, though I rather think William Hague's may save the electoral future of the Tory party. Even to Mr Hague I would add a note of caution. Baseball caps are associated in the public mind mainly with Diana, Princess of Wales and Nick Leeson — it makes a mixed image and not necessarily an ideal one for British politics. Cricket is trying to find a post-classical balance, and that is always hard to achieve.

Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* analyses the failure of Rome to find its stable post-classic synthesis. Where Rome has failed, why should we expect Lord's to succeed?

A town called malice

Magnus Linklater on the corruption of a Labour heartland

Until recently I did not know that you could still buy up a local branch of the Labour Party by bribing new members. I joined it. Nor, indeed, had I ever heard of a party worker being forced to make a political statement with a gun at his head; or talked to a councillor who had spent the night crouching under his sofa because he thought it was about to be taken out by gangsters. But then, until recently, had never been to Paisley.

What is it about this once dour city, "famed alike for shawls and thread, for poverty and poets", in the words of a 19th-century rhymist, that has turned it into what the newspapers now call "a town called malice"? The sad death of Gordon McMaster MP for Paisley South, has lifted a corner of a very grubby curtain. I reveals an aspect of modern politics which most of us thought had gone out with the rotten boroughs. And it shows that for all Tony Blair's reforms, there is a yawning gap between the ideals of new Labour and the grim reality at its grassroots.

Mr McMaster's suicide note, now with the *Whip's* Office, accuses two colleagues of fuelling his despair and driving him to his death. Both deny the charges, but no one doubts that the whispering campaign of which he complained was the culmination of some poisonous feuds over many years in the constituencies of Paisley North and Renfrewshire West.

My own experience goes back to 1995, when Irene Adams, MP for Paisley North, decided to put down a series of questions about drug-dealing and violence in the city. There had been a horrendous catalogue of assaults, intimidation and murder in and around Paisley, largely as a result of two gangs warring with each other over disputed territory.

What concerned Mrs Adams and prompted her questions was the suggestion that some of their drug money was being laundered through a local job-creation scheme. It was funded both by Renfrew council and the Scottish Office, and it seemed possible that public money was being siphoned off by the underworld under the noses of local councillors. Mrs Adams and Mr McMaster — who represented Paisley South — had worked closely with the police, and their inquiries had stirred up a hornet's nest among the gangsters. One regional councillor told me he had been woken in the middle of the night by a car driving up to his front door and shining its headlights straight into his bedroom. He was convinced he was going to be killed.

It is a town where the hostility and backstabbing I encountered between different factions of the local Labour Party, far from Mrs Adams winning support from her colleagues for what seemed a principled cause, she was accused of using it merely to hang onto her seat. "She's posing as Joan of Arc," sneered a rival, "while the rest of us are made to look like gangsters."

Resentment went back to the way she had won the nomination for Paisley North in the first place. A local branch secretary demanded that she be deselected, then recanted, saying he had made the statement only because someone had pointed a gun at his head in front of his 13-year-old daughter (his claim was never investigated). I heard evidence that local branches of the party had been taken over by the simple expedient of buying up new members — with activists paying their dues, some times on a single cheque, then using them to vote out existing office holders. On one occasion the new membership was said to have been recruited en bloc from an old people's home.

Three inquiries held by Strathclyde council failed to amass enough proof, and there seemed a reluctance to take matters any further. Worse, a Scottish Office report into the possible misuse of government money has still not been completed two years on. Meanwhile, things have deteriorated. Last year, the entire Paisley Central Labour branch was suspended after a local councillor put himself forward for election despite not being included on the candidates' short-list. Now, after the McMaster affair, yet another party inquiry has been ordered.

What seems to have happened under the long years of Labour control is this: in a former working-class area trade union influence has declined and there are few skilled manual workers to provide local candidates. As a result, politicians of real ability are hard to find. Without strong organisations, unscrupulous activists have found it easy to take over branches by packing them with new members. Small cliques can wield real power, and they are difficult to dislodge. At the same time the Labour Party in Scotland has dragged its feet disgracefully, unwilling to rock the boat in one of its heartland areas.

If Tony Blair is serious about cleaning up his party in Scotland, he has to take serious action in Paisley. The implications spread well beyond the boundaries of the city: who will want to stand for a brave new parliament in Edinburgh if they think that Labour politics is still bogged down in sleaze and corruption?

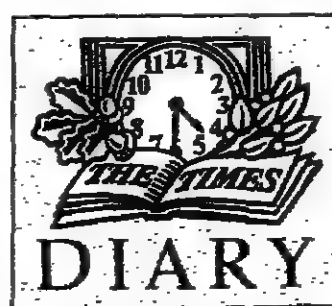
Don't panic

THIRTY years after its first episode, *Dad's Army* is to be filmed at the Oval cricket ground next April. The *Dad's Army* Appreciation Society is organising morning manoeuvres in the outfield, followed by lunch in the banqueting hall — drawn forward by Private Godfrey's sister Dolly's upside-down cake.

It is heart-warming news for all those whose Saturday evenings

take-off with the opening bars of *Who do you think you are kidding Mr Hitler?* Graham Leonard, the former Bishop of London, was known to speed through Evesington to be sure of not missing Captain Mainwaring and the gang.

The president of the society is Bill Pertwee — that awful man Hodges, the ARP warden. "It will be for the men and women of the appreciation society first and fore-



most," says Pertwee of his planned fiesta. "though we may invite one or two high-ranking Army personages. The Services go potty over it." The writers of the show, Jimmy Perry and David Croft, will attend. Cast members expected include Clive Dunn, the panicky Cpl Jones, who now runs a B&B in Portugal, the Reverend Frank Williams, the vicar, now a lay preacher, Ian Lavender, Pike, and Colin Bean, Private Sponge, who despite having only five lines in the entire series is a favourite among aficionados.

A moving moment will be the toast to Tadge Muldoon, the former editor of the DAAS newsletter and Yorkshire skip-hire magnate, whose party trick was to recite entire scripts from the show. He died three years ago, crushed by one of his own skips and would hate to be missing the party.

Unable to subsidise off the revenue from their sporadic television appearances, Neil and Christine Hamilton have been forced to cancel their newspaper subscriptions. "Neil's taken to reading them off the shelves in our local newsagent," says Mrs Hamilton, "but we always welcome copies of yesterday's papers from neighbours." Anyone with old newspapers to spare should send them to Neil and Christine Hamilton, Battersea, South London.

Blighted

THERE is unrest in the potting-shed as Classic FM blows the whistle on *Gardener's Forum*, its answer to the BBC's *Gardener's Question Time*. In 1994, the commercial station took an elephant gun to the BBC by poaching its three *GQT* stars, Dr Stefan Buczacki, Sue Phillips and Fred Downham. The last *Forum*, however, is to be recorded at the National Amateur Gardening Show, in Shepton Mallet on September 6.

The problem, it seems, is cost. The Cheltenham and Gloucester Building Society paid £400,000 to nurse the show through its early years. That sponsorship has now finished and Classic FM can no longer afford costly outside broadcasts from remote village halls.

Only the intervention of a local seed manufacturer saved the last broadcast. A cheaper phone-in programme may replace it.

There is a nasty whiff of Schadenfreude at the BBC. Trevor Taylor, the producer of *Gardener's Question Time*, says: "Programmes, like plants, only do well when they are firmly rooted. *GQT* is 50 years old this year and blossoming."

Down at the Barbican Centre, in London, a republican is at work.

Included in September's programme: Discover The Lost Musicals is an old Cole Porter-Moss Hart number called *The Princess Diana Musical*. The Queen's ambition is to persuade Johnny Weismuller, the swimmer turned Tarzan, to teach her the breaststroke, while trying to keep her family popular with a restive populace. Princess Diana, her daughter in this case, longs for romance and a life outside the Royal circle.

Gun ho

ONE of the country's top grouse moors is coming to the market. West Stanhope Moor, Co Durham, is probably the finest moor to be sold since Earl Peel sold Gunnerside, his Yorkshire estate, to the duty-free billionaire Robert Miller in 1994. Syndicate members who use the estate include the North's finest shot, the Duke of Northumberland.

The ten-year average bag is 1,095 brace, with daily bags of 200 bags not uncommon. In 1991, some 355 brace were shot in one day, enough to satisfy even those who like their birds flying thicker than the Persian king's javelins which blocked out the sun.

P.H.S.



Captain Mainwaring and *Dad's Army* prepare for a party

09/08/1992

GERMAN GRIDLOCK

Kohl has never seemed less securely in control

In Britain, "Germany's inability to reform is greeted with mockery." The verdict is not that of a Tory xenophobe; this was the bitter truth with which Theo Waigel, Germany's Finance Minister, berated the opposition Social Democrats (SPD) this week for blocking his vaunted "tax reform of the century" in the Bundestag, the German parliament's upper house which they control.

From the SPD benches came the tart retort that any Social Democrat minister who, after 15 years in power, had dug unplugable holes in the nation's finances and let unemployment soar to a new record of 4.396 million would be viciously eviscerated by the voters. It hit home. Helmut Kohl's shoulders shook, but he laughed with everything but his eyes.

Herr Waigel's anger is understandable. Although the governing coalition will try yet again next month to cut a deal with the SPD, the package is almost certainly headed for the scrapheap, where it will moulder until after the September 1998 federal elections. The dispute has become a symbol of what the Finance Minister calls the "self-paralysis" of the German political system.

The point is that almost no German questions the urgency of overhauling the tax system, a regulatory jumble which encourages tax evasion, penalises investment, discourages potential employers and inflicts even on relatively modest earners top-income taxes of 53 per cent. His plans for steep cuts in tax rates, financed by ending some of Germany's myriad tax loopholes and broadening the base, are on the right lines.

The SPD justifies its veto on the ground that it is unaffordable, with tax revenues sagging as dole queues continue to grow. Herr Waigel's sums do not add up. But it is motivated by politics more than mathematics; inaction will, after all, mean more tax evasion and still higher unemployment and the SPD knows it. It also knows that for Herr Kohl, tax reform was his best hope of a supply-side boost to the economy in time for

his bid for a fifth term. The Chancellor has vowed to hound the SPD for this through every German village. In previous years, that would have been a formidable threat. But it is a measure of the Chancellor's weakening political grip that instead of blaming the SPD, business and voters tend to cite this fiasco as one more proof that the coalition he heads has become tired, weak, quarrelsome and incompetent. A third of the voters within his own Christian Democrat Party say that the SPD's Gerhard Schröder would make a better Chancellor.

Herr Kohl has recovered from previous bouts of unpopularity, but he is vulnerable to the SPD charge that after 15 years in power, a Government that complains about Germany's lack of reform should look in the mirror. The truth increasingly recognised is that Herr Kohl is part of the problem, because Germany's postwar "social market" model fits him like a comfortable old glove. While the immediate cause of Germany's economic difficulties is unification — still costing around £44 billion a year — well before 1990, the engine of Rhenish capitalism was already sputtering.

Herr Kohl promised Germans less government when he was first elected in 1982. He has done too little, too late. State subsidies are still independently estimated at £100 billion a year, privatisation and deregulation is only now being tackled and Herr Kohl has done no more than tinker with a social security system that adds an unaffordable 41.7 per cent to labour costs. His grand obsession, European monetary union, is at odds with Germany's present mood. Germany missed out on what should have been its reforming agenda for the 1980s; has paid dearly in the 1990s and, although the recession may be easing in the western Länder, ends the 20th century less certain of itself than at any time since Weimar. In Europe, Herr Kohl still plays the man of destiny, but at home, he has never seemed less securely in charge.

THE GAP TRAP

Deferred entry students deserve some sympathy

There are few more familiar features of August in this country than examination results and the subsequent annual struggle for university admission. Those who have fallen short of their required A-level marks and others who have surpassed their initial expectations enter what is known as the "clearing" process. Despite regular threats of chaos and collapse this device invariably succeeds in matching students with courses. The strain may be rather more intense on this occasion.

As we have reported over the past two days, the emergence of "the gap trap" may lead to record numbers of qualified applicants chasing a limited supply of places. The trap is a consequence of Sir Ron Dearing's report and decisions taken by David Blunkett. The Government's announcement that it would introduce income-related tuition fees and abolish the remaining maintenance grant from October 1998 has a special impact on up to 26,000 prospective students. They applied for deferred entry well before the Dearing report was issued or Mr Blunkett spoke but now find themselves inside the new system. Large numbers have decided to seek a slot in October 1997 almost regardless of course or campus. This may swamp the fragile clearing mechanism.

While most observers had assumed that there would be a radical alteration in student finance they had also thought such a shift would not start until 1999. Had that been the case then the trap would not have materialised. The Education Secretary decided that the crisis in Britain's universities was so intense that 12 months' delay was impractical. His department knew that if the Government did not act, large numbers of cash-strapped institutions would unilat-

erally initiate their own tuition charges. Although Mr Blunkett took the least bad decision it still leaves thousands of students in an invidious situation.

They applied, were offered, and then accepted conditional places expecting one set of funding rules and have found themselves faced with another. It would be a distortion of the clearing procedure — which is primarily designed for those left without places — if these belated applicants removed others from higher education. It would also seem a breach of natural justice — and possibly of statute law — if those who sought deferred entry in 1998 were to suffer financial penalty.

It is especially unfortunate that the effect should be felt by those who chose to take a 12-month break between school and university. Tutorial opinion has swung strongly to the view that, provided the time is used in a stimulating fashion, the year out has considerable educational value. In the future larger numbers may well take up this option, not least to raise money to support themselves during their study. It would be a poor precedent if deferred entry carried the risk of being caught by a switch in Whitehall policy.

Mr Blunkett should consider compromise rather than risk chaos during clearing this month and then confrontation in the courts afterwards. The total numbers affected are rather small compared with the entire university intake. The Government should retain the previous funding arrangements for these students if they start their course in 1998 as scheduled. This will, admittedly, create another anomaly. Transitions by their very nature involve some inconsistencies. But it would be unwise for Mr Blunkett's brave new world to start with an act that will strike most people as at odds with basic fairness.

SOUR GRAPES

There is no excuse for the appalling quality of wine in pubs

Age has not improved the wine sold in Britain's public houses. Ten years ago *Which?* magazine investigated pub wine and found that far too much was unpleasant and overpriced; a decade later it is just as undrinkable, and the palates of tasting inspectors were so offended that they spat out their criticism as fast as the plonk that they were served.

Beer is the staple of British inns, and for generations pints of the foaming liquor quenched the thirst of country yokels and urban workers alike. In England, spirits were admitted later, as Scottish and Irish elders began to establish a fondness for whisky and whiskey; gin, too, became a fast route to inebriation — though the drink that once was consumed in Victorian gin palaces now boasts far better-beeled devotees among the yachting set and the home counties. But wine, with its dangerous associations of Continental morals, hedonistic abandon and rampant snobbery, was never welcome. Men who were men did not drink wine; their wives, if admitted, might be allowed, perhaps, a glass of port. But publicans, lugging beer barrels from dry to cellar, had neither time nor patience to quibble about vintage. The Chardonnay and Pinot has never caught on as an inn sign.

But mine host is, for once, unusually out of step with the regulars. Britons have started drinking wine in enormous quantities. With

one of the world's most open markets, a supermarket explosion in New World offerings and a holiday culture largely dependent on quantities of Rioja, it is not only city sophisticates and fevered poets who long for a "beaker full of the warm south". A glass of white wine is increasingly part of the pub round. And those pubs that aspire to stardom in gourmet guides find that as demand for home cooking rises, so too does the desire for an elegant glass of Pouilly Fumé or some nice Australian Shiraz.

It is at this moment that a pub's reputation is dashed. For however good the onion soup or prawn sandwiches, the chances are that the white wine will be warm and the red sour. Nor will it be cheap. Pubs charge as much as restaurants for wine and their profit margins are enormous. There should be no difficulty in keeping wine chilled. Nor is ignorance any excuse. With the closure of dozens of local breweries, beer was in danger of becoming homogenised, and it took a spirited campaign by real ale devotees to bring back the hand-pulled, hop-rich pint. The problem, it seems, is that landlords are still tied to their suppliers, and the breweries have an age-old distrust of the grape. Only a few — the award-winning Adnams of East Anglia being a conspicuous example — take pride in both beer and wine. A drinker is ill-advised to attempt both on an evening; but he should have a proper choice.

Army promotion and public schools

From Major-General P. M. Davies

Sir, Major Eric Joyce (report and photograph, August 4) is guilty of a sophistry by inferring in his Fabian Society pamphlet that "blatant social selection" prevails in the Army's commissioned hierarchy.

Like the majority of my postwar contemporaries who joined the Army as a vocation, I was subjected to a rigorous and testing selection process over 30 years to achieve senior rank, viz. as a National Service private soldier (1950), Unit Selection Board, War Office Selection Board, Officer Cadet Training Unit, Regular Commissions Board — all prior to entry to Sandhurst; by examination for promotion to captain and again to the Staff College; by examination for promotion to major and then to the National Defence College; and by selection board for entry to the Royal College of Defence Studies.

At no time in 30 years climbing the ladder was my school, Charterhouse, a rung, I believe, of real importance, and subject to annual recorded assessment, coupled with experience in operational theatres.

I fully support the present and widely used system of commissioning NCOs based on their ability, experience and potential: their contribution is outstanding.

Let there be no doubt, however, that the very highest ranks in the Army, which I did not achieve, are reached competitively only by those officers of superlative merit, competence and experience. To suggest that they are just push is sheer tosh.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP DAVIES,
Vine Cottage,
Fonthill Gifford, Tisbury, Wiltshire.
August 5.

From Captain Nigel Vinson (ret'd)

Sir, I believe it is eminently sensible, as suggested by Major Joyce, that Army officer and soldier recruiting be merged — until one considers the competing requirements.

Soldiers, while certainly encouraged to show a degree of initiative, should expect to be led by their senior commissioned and non-commissioned officers. Officers are required to be more flexible, determined and have a practical intellect, irrespective of the pressures placed upon them, whilst also maintaining a level of humanity so vital on peacekeeping missions. In short, they must lead by example, striking a balance between the application of reason, persuasion and, if absolutely necessary, force in order to achieve their goals.

Consequently, many officers such as myself (1991-97) attain a graduate-level entry into the Army and come through the state school system. Some were former soldiers, having displayed the necessary qualities whilst in the ranks; others proved themselves capable by succeeding during the year-long training course at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

Irrespective, many soldiers make excellent corporals and sergeants, with a firm grip on discipline and an uncanny ability to predict the next order and "get things done". Among these a few will attain a commission, yet not necessarily rise to the highest ranks. Why? Not because the Army does not recognise their experience or potential, or because of snobbery, but because each officer must reach a certain rank by a certain age bracket. Join the Army late, at 25-plus, or "lose" time as a soldier, and the key hurdles to the attainment of higher rank cannot easily be overcome.

Ultimately the Army must possess a clearly defined hierarchy — the necessities of combat demand as much — but a more flexible attitude towards age and experience would more easily assist the passage of suitable soldiers into the officer structure and on to higher rank.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL VINSON
(Duke of Westminster
Research Fellow),
Royal United Services
Institute for Defence Studies,
Whitehall, SW1.
August 5.

From Mrs Fiona Chapman

Sir, My grandfather, Sir William Robertson, rose from private (1877) to field marshal (1919) in the British Army, when the class divides were enormous.

I believe that talent will make its way through more easily than it did in my grandfather's day.

Yours faithfully,
FIONA CHAPMAN,
23 Church End, Milton Bryan,
Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire.
August 5.

From Captain David E. A. Michael (ret'd)

Sir, Has nobody yet told Major Eric Joyce that for very sound military reasons leaders have tended always to come from the "teeth arms" and that the best breeding ground for such is the public-school system?

Democratic socialism never has worked and never will. Major Joyce should stick to his rations and leave politics out of the Army.

Yours faithfully,
D. E. A. MICHAEL,
68 Cheyne Court,
Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea, SW3.
August 5.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Local and global impact of increase in organic farming

From Mr Craig Sams

Sir, Michael Hornsby's report of July 29 on Britain's abysmal incentives to organic farmers included the usual superficial price comparison of organic food versus conventional produce.

The real cost of conventional food is not found on the supermarket till receipt but is hidden in water bills, tax bills and healthcare costs. One billion pounds have been invested by water companies in clean-up equipment, along with an annual £121 million water-cleaning cost to remove pesticides and nitrates from water, so that it can meet EU minimum standards.

The soaring level of food poisoning, with 93,000 reported cases in 1996 compared to 19,000 in 1985, is a cost to the National Health Service, not to the purchaser of factory-farmed meat. The common agricultural policy costs every UK household £20 per week. In 1983 organic farmers banned the feeding practices that led to BSE, a cost to the nation most recently estimated at £4 billion, and still rising.

Poisoning by pesticides is an occupational hazard for farm workers, particularly those who handle sheep dip. The NHS picks up the treatment cost, but the real cost is the waste of human potential. Genetic engineering of food, an attempt to industrialise the fundamental processes of nature, holds risks that only experience will enable us to assess.

If all these costs were diverted to the supermarket bill then market forces would do the rest.

Yours sincerely,
CRAIG SAMs
(Chairman),
Whole Earth Foods Ltd,
269 Portobello Road, W11,
July 29.

From the Chief Executive of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Sir, The RSPB has long argued that farmers should be supported for envi-

ronmental, not production reasons. Increasing funding for organic farming would be one certain way of ensuring this is the case.

Many farmland birds such as the skylark and grey partridge have undergone drastic declines over the past 25 years, as have a wide range of invertebrates and plants. Research shows that organic farms are favoured by these birds and greater numbers can be found feeding and nesting there than on conventional farms.

Not all farmers will wish to or be able to become organic. However, many of the principles underlying organic farming could be applied more widely to UK farming, with the accompanying benefits to wildlife.

Increasing payments to farmers to help them through the conversion period is one way to increase the number of organic farms in the UK.

The RSPB believes the lack of ongoing maintenance payments, which are already enjoyed by many other European countries and are funded through EU environmental regulations, is a clear disincentive to many. Such annual payments are justified on the grounds that they reward farmers for the environmental goods they deliver.

If the Government is serious about its review of organic farming, it should set an ambitious target to increase the amount of land farmed organically in the UK to 5 per cent within the next five years.

Yours faithfully,
BARBARA S. YOUNG,
Chief Executive,
The Royal Society for the
Protection of Birds,
The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire.
July 30.

From Mr R. P. Voelcker

Sir, It is difficult to follow the logic of those who call for greater support for organic farming. The product fills a niche market at higher prices, yet the

operated in recent years — 11,089 in 1996 and 11,060 in 1995, thereupon subverting the claim that the use of detention is "carefully targeted" and used only as a "last resort" — have included many individuals who have later been recognised as refugees and granted asylum by the Home Office. The systematic use of detention in asylum cases is contrary to fundamental principles of international protection and human rights standards.

Surely it is time that the new Government acted decisively to cut back on the practice whereby a fairly junior immigration official can detain asylum-seekers without charge or trial for an unlimited length of time.

Yours faithfully,
M. LOUISE PIROUET
(Co-ordinator,
Charter '87 for Refugees),
8 Geldart Street, Cambridge.
August 1.

Plight of detainees

From Dr M. Louise Pirouet

Sir, Mrs Annie Anderson (letter, August 1; see also letter, July 29) rightly holds that asylum-seekers should not be held in criminal prisons. To do so is contrary to the guidelines of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, which state that, if for some exceptional reason an asylum-seeker has to be detained, then he should not be held with "common criminals".

But most asylum-seekers should not be detained at all. On July 17 this year the UNHCR's representative in the United Kingdom, Mr Philippe Lavanchy, stated in a speech that almost 900 asylum-seekers were then being detained in this country. He went on:

The thousands of asylum-seekers so incar-

Rockall fisheries

From Commander M. B. F. Ranken

Sir, Your report of July 28, "Britain is ready to give up Rockall", is based on a false premise. Rockall cannot sustain human habitation or economic life. Under the UN Law of the Sea Convention 1982, which comes into force in three weeks' time, it is therefore not entitled to an exclusive economic zone or continental shelf, but does retain a 12-nautical-mile territorial sea and contiguous zone.

No country has recognised the UK's claim to the 200-nautical-mile limits around Rockall, enacted to reinforce our annexation of the rock in 1955. Neither our fishermen (nor others entitled within the European Union) have been deterred from fishing there; nor should they be now, once we abandon the 60,000 square-nautical-mile segment to the west of Rockall. It remains to be seen whether many new entrants are attracted to this area by the rock's partial reversion to the high seas.

Mineral rights on and below Rockall will remain unaffected. Indeed, as redefined under Article 76 of the Convention, the UK's continental shelf will extend further, "throughout the natural prolongation of its land territory to the outer edge of the continental margin". Rockall, within that prolongation, makes no difference.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL RANKEN
(Secretary,
The Parliamentary
Maritime Group),
44 Castelnau Mansions,
Castelnau, Barnes, SW13.
August 4.

Common language

From Mr Gwyn Hughes Clark

Sir, I predict that if we get our assembly, Welsh speakers will address it in Welsh, and English speakers will need instantaneous translation. Welsh speakers will demand equal treatment for their language. Thus, a body of which every member shares a common language will be split by an uncommon one.

Then, without the Anglo-Saxon to blame for everything, we can go back to our happy past when all Walians detested each other.

Yours sincerely,
GWYN HUGHES CLARK,
20 Haven Way, Abergavenny, Gwent.
prsdj3@pop.prestel.co.uk

Editor's decision

From the Editor of The Spectator

Sir, Your diatribe, *The Listener*, claims (Media and Marketing, August 6) that I lacked the "courage" to print an article by Mr Alan Rusbridger, *The Guardian* editor, replying to Mr Paul Johnson's adverse criticism of him in *The Spectator* in the Jonathan Aitken matter. The *Listener* adds that "on reading the copy — which included references to Johnson's wife, Marjorie — the Editor decided it was too cruel for his magazine".

I read no such copy. Mr Rusbridger did not send me his article. I originally said he could write a piece replying to Mr Johnson. But that was before he devoted a *Guardian* leader to doing so. Since he had an entire newspaper in which to defend himself, that by now it was August (when *Spectator* space is tight), and I thought my readers could only accept a certain amount of space being devoted to this subject, I offered Mr Rusbridger a lengthy letter rather than an article. He replied that he would think about it. So far he has not sent it; perhaps understandably, since he would prefer an article.

If the *Listener's* implication is that Mr Rusbridger would have been cruel about Mrs Marjorie Johnson, as well as Mr Paul Johnson, I do not believe it. His dispute is with Mr Johnson, not Mrs Johnson. I remain happy to publish a lengthy letter from Mr Rusbridger, without a footnote in reply from Mr Johnson.

Yours faithfully,
FRANK JOHNSON,
Editor, *The Spectator*,
56 Doughty Street, WC1.
August 5.

Hidden menace

From Mr John Clarke

Sir, I see from your science editor's report today that eating rice pudding is more likely than passive smoking to produce lung cancer. I don't eat it myself, but what are my chances if I'm puddling eaters?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN CLARKE,
55 Heathlands, Swaffham, Norfolk.
jake@jace.demon.co.uk
August 6.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

organic farmer receives the same acreage and headage payments from the common agricultural policy as all other producers. Where cereals are grown yields may be 30 per cent less, but inputs are less and the sale price is higher.

World cereal consumption is rising and set-aside will soon be a thing of the past. In a world context a policy of encouraging organic farming would need to be balanced by bringing more land somewhere into cultivation, greater yields from existing land, or a reduction in the population.

One must never forget that the scientific research that has led to high yields from existing land is the factor that has so far allowed the game reserves and the rain forests to escape human cultivation.

Yours faithfully,
R. P. VOELCKER,
Avils Farm,
Lower Stanton St Quintin,
Nr Chippenham, Wiltshire.
July 30.

From Mr A. D. Harris

Sir, It may be that organic food tastes better, and that organic farms are more friendly to wildlife. But what is incontrovertible, according to the July issue of *Scientific American* magazine, is that if the use of artificial nitrogenous fertilisers were stopped worldwide, two billion of the world's total population of six billion would starve.

Those able to afford it are welcome to choose to spend their money on expensive organic food, but it is difficult to understand why the Government wants to spend more taxpayers' money encouraging a method of farming that, if applied globally, would result in mass starvation.

Yours sincerely,
A. D. HARRIS,
10 Evertons Close,
Droitwich, Worcestershire.
July 30.

Tossed but not beaten

From Mr David C. A. Allberry

Sir, In the early 1930s when my father, C. R. C. Allberry, was a young don and a noted cricketer at Christ's College, Cambridge, he demonstrated a similar theory to that propounded by your correspondent, Mr David Lyne (letter, July 31).

In a letter to my mother in 1984, Professor Thomas Burrow, Emeritus Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford, wrote: "I remember one occasion when I test the theory that an egg would not break if it fell on to grass, even from a height, he threw one from the Second Court over the Fellows' Building into the college garden. This was a remarkable feat considering the height and width of that building. The egg did not break."

Yours faithfully,
DAVID C. A. ALLBERRY,
The White House,
Spitalgate,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire.
August 1.

From Mr R. K. Day

Sir, Many years ago I taught my children the art of egg bouncing, so that they could augment their pocket money by relieving friends' fathers of loose change in bins. Unfortunately, the fathers, having had demonstrated a successful bounce, would invariably refuse to believe it and walk away with their debts unpaid.

My preferred method is to throw the egg over the house, rather than vertically into the air. I, too, have several theories on what makes for a successful egg-bounce but my wife is unwilling to fund the research programme.

Yours faithfully,
R. K. DAY,
Crowsnest House,
Crowsnest Lane,
Comberbach, Cheshire.
July 31.

From Mr Antony J. Goldman

Sir, I was fascinated to read of Mr Lyne's "present circle of friends" who witnessed his curious egg-throwing experiments. He fears that he will run out of fresh eggs before he finds out why they keep breaking when they hit the ground.

My own fear is that he will run out of friends before he runs out of eggs.

Yours faithfully,
ANTONY GOLDMAN,
Maltings,
1 Knoll Wood, Godalming, Surrey.
August 4.

From Mr Philip Warner

Sir, The weather does not affect the egg throwing, as Mr Lyne seems to imply.

In Nigeria it worked in both the rainy and dry seasons. When we failed, we put it down to insufficient Star beer and corrected the problem.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP WARNER,
Birch Wood House,
Cadnam, Southampton, Hampshire.
July 31.

From Jack Burrows

Sir, I suggest, Mr Lyne, you boil your eggs before you throw them.

Yours sincerely,
JACK BURROWS (aged 9),
81 Greenfield Road,
Filton, Bedfordshire.
August 1.

OBITUARIES

BRIGADIER DENIS ESMONDE-WHITE

Brigadier Denis Esmonde-White, CBE, MC and Bar, formerly the Army's director of work study, died on July 11 aged 81. He was born on June 20, 1916.

It was while serving as a forward observation officer with artillery units in the Second World War that Denis Esmonde-White won his Military Crosses. In 1941 in Eritrea in the Horn of Africa he braved heavy fire to reach his observation post and direct his battery's guns on to the Italian artillery, which was inflicting heavy losses on the British infantry.

His second Military Cross was awarded three years later, in France, when he set up an observation post well in front of his own troops. From it, he guided the guns onto an advancing German column, until the leading enemy tank was less than fifty yards away and his radio was smashed by a direct hit.

His commanding officer put his name forward for a VC, and the commendation was turned down, only because there were so many similar acts of heroism and self-sacrifice at that time, as the Allies pushed forward across North-West Europe. Esmonde-White went on to serve in the Far East, where he was mentioned in dispatches during the fighting in Burma.

But perhaps the greatest test of his courage came ten years after the war, when he was posted as military assistant to Montgomery, who in the mid-1950s was deputy supreme allied commander at Nato military headquarters in Versailles.

Esmonde-White had been warned that he would not get a job, and that his name was being put forward for interview just to make up numbers. With little to lose, therefore, he strode in to see the great man and boldly started to cross-question him about his command and appointments in the Western Desert.

To his amazement, Montgomery's reaction was simply to march him towards a wall map and begin a half-hour explanation of his more controversial decisions. At the end he turned to his stunned one-man audience and backed: "Right, start on Monday, 9 o'clock sharp."

Shortly afterwards, Monty complained: "For Heaven's



sake, Esmonde," (he never used the full surname) "can't you stop jumping up and down when I come in?" So Esmonde-White fitted a button beneath his desk which would open the door automatically when he heard the familiar footsteps, while he continued to work, head down, at his desk. Monty was delighted.

They developed a great mutual regard and respect, which continued for many years. "Montgomery discovered that Esmonde-White's son shared his own birthday (November 17), and the two birthday boys exchanged cards every year. He also insisted on taking the

first look at the junior Esmonde-White's Eagle comm when it arrived at the office. Esmonde-White himself prepared the maps for Montgomery's memoirs, receiving in return an inscribed copy acknowledging the author's indebtedness.

But his greatest reward came in 1957, when, on leaving the Field Marshal's office, he received a glowing report from the victor of El Alamein. His military assistant had proved a "high-class staff officer", it said, and merited immediate command of a garrison regiment to open the way to further promotion.

Denis Carlo Basil Luke

Esmonde-White (whose first name was pronounced the French way) was born in a Normandy château belonging to an aunt and uncle. He spent his childhood and early schooldays in France, mostly at his uncle's apartment in Nice, where the family mingled with the cosmopolitan society of the Riviera. Esmonde-White's godmother was the morganatic widow of Tsar Alexander II (who was murdered in 1882).

He came to Britain to go to school at the Imperial Service College, from where he went on to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. Commissioned into the Royal Artil-

lery in 1936, he passed out top of the young officers' course at Larkhill.

When he turned 21 the French Army sent him his call-up papers. Only the intervention of the British consul in Rouen saved him from being branded a deserter.

He served for some years in India, where he developed a passion for polo. Returning there after the war he attended the staff college at Quetta. In 1952 he was commanding a battery in Kenya at the time that the young Princess Elizabeth succeeded to the throne while en route to Australia with the Duke of Edinburgh. His battery fired the first official salute of the Queen's reign, and Esmonde-White had the first cartridge case made into an inkwell, which was then presented to her.

He commanded an anti-aircraft regiment in the Isle of Wight after leaving Montgomery's staff, and this enabled him to indulge his other great sporting passion: sailing. The Royal Artillery's yacht, the *St Barbara*, was then berthed at Cowes.

He rose to become deputy director of the Royal Artillery at Woolwich. Then in 1967 he began his last job, as the Army's director of work study - responsible for advising units on how to increase efficiency.

He retired in 1971, and spent much of the rest of his life on his own yacht, crossing the Channel 156 times and venturing as far as Spain. He took great pride in his election to the Royal Yacht Squadron.

He was a tall man, built somewhat larger than life, and a highly articulate professional, never afraid of telling his superiors what he thought. This may have been why he did not advance quite so far in the Army as had once seemed possible. He had a dry, irreverent sense of humour, and it was said that young subordinates who took their problems to him always came away laughing - at least temporarily.

He met his wife Pat in Egypt in 1941. She was running the International Girl Guides unit there and asked the local regimental commander to send along a young officer to test them in map reading. The commanding officer dispatched Esmonde-White, and they were married within six days. She survives him together with their son, also an army officer.

CHUCK WAYNE



Chuck Wayne (right) with Barbara Carroll and Clyde Lombardi

Chuck Wayne, American jazz guitarist, died in Jackson, New Jersey, on July 29 aged 74. He was born in New York on February 27, 1923.

CHUCK WAYNE was one of a handful of talented guitarists who helped to define a new role for their instrument at a crucial time in the history of jazz.

Until the bebop revolution of the 1940s, the guitar had tended to be restricted to a predominantly rhythmic function, in both large and small jazz groups, with soloists emphasising the instrument's chordal possibilities. As the 1940s dawned, however, and following the experiments in amplification which had been pioneered by Eddie Durham and Charlie Christian, guitarists became able to emulate the solo melodic lines of saxophonists or trumpeters by playing amplified sequences of single notes.

Wayne was among the pioneers of this new style, contributing to influential recordings by Sarah Vaughan and Dizzy Gillespie in 1944-45, and demonstrating that the guitar had an entirely different voice in 1940s jazz from what had gone before.

Wayne was born Charles Jagelka, into a Czech immi-

grant family, and his first instruments were the balalaika and mandolin of his European heritage. He became a talented player of most instruments of this type, even at one point recording an album on the banjo.

The guitar was the logical choice of instrument when he decided to play jazz, and he soon found work with small groups led by Clarence Profit and Nat Jaffe. Like so many other New Yorkers, he gravitated to 52nd Street, where numerous jazz clubs offered plenty of work, and he ended up playing in the group at the Hickory House led by the traditional clarinetist Joe Marsala. However, Marsala was also open to new ideas in jazz (once hiring Dizzy Gillespie for a recording), and Wayne was able to absorb the new language of bebop during the time he spent on "The Street" from 1944 to 1946.

At the prompting of the British critic Leonard Feather, he took part in one of Sarah Vaughan's earliest recording dates, and soon afterwards played in Dizzy Gillespie's sextet for the definitive records *Blue 'n Boogie* and *Groovin' High*.

This was followed by a period playing with Phil Moore at the Café Society, before Wayne accepted the

invitation to replace Billy Bauer in Woody Herman's big band. In this band, Wayne contributed to many now famous recording sessions, among them Ralph Burns's *Summer Sequence* and *Early Autumn*.

After leaving Herman's band, Wayne led his own group for a while, until Leonard Feather introduced him to the pianist George Shearing. Shearing had just split up from the clarinetist Buddy De Franco, and Feather suggested that he hire Wayne and the vibraphonist Marge Hyams to create a new sound. The results were immensely successful, and the association lasted from 1949 to 1952, in what became Shearing's best-known quintet.

Thereafter, Wayne went on to balance lucrative studio and television work on the Carol Burnett and Ed Sullivan shows, with jazz and cabaret engagements where he played alongside the likes of Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett and Barbara Streisand. He was a member of the CBS music staff in the 1960s and 1970s, and also appeared in the pit bands for a number of Broadway shows, as well as both composing and playing on a number of film soundtracks. Illness prevented him continuing an active career in recent years.

LOUIS COHEN

Louis Cohen, physicist, died on July 28 aged 71. He was born on October 14, 1925.

THE British community of physicists owes an enormous debt to Dr Louis Cohen, who was executive secretary of the Institute of Physics for 24 years. During this period, the institute was seen by physicists as serving their needs and fighting their causes increasingly well. Institute membership rose by more than a half within six years of his appointment in 1966.

When Cohen came to the institute, he found that the merger a few years earlier of the Physical Society and the Institute of Physics, each with a long history and its own

traditions, had led to some resentment. He worked hard during his first years to make the new body successful, and gradually his personality and perseverance won over almost all the members. By 1970, the institute was in a position to seek and subsequently obtain a Royal Charter.

Louis Cohen had just taken up his post when a most embarrassing incident occurred. The institute's council, during the interregnum between executive secretaries, had invited the Duke of Edinburgh to become an honorary fellow. "It was only after the Duke accepted that it emerged that election to honorary fellowship required the agreement of the corporate members in a secret ballot. Unfortunately, this

agreement was not obtained and it fell to Louis Cohen to carry out the unenviable task of informing the Palace of the changed situation. Consequently, Cohen made sure that the institute's bylaws were changed to place responsibility for election to honorary fellowship solely with council.

Cohen's management and negotiating skills, honed during his early career in industry, came to the fore in the 1970s, when the lease on the institute's premises in Belgrave Square had only a decade or so to run. He negotiated successfully with the Grosvenor Estate for an extension of 75 years at most favourable terms. He knew that the estate had no wish to increase the number of embassies in the

square, were loath to lease premises to commercial enterprises, and would have been in difficulty finding another suitable tenant.

Cohen always emphasised the importance of education in physics at all levels, both as mental training and as a vocational education second to none. Under his leadership, the institute established a reputation for supporting physics teachers and bringing an awareness of physics to the general public.

During his tenure, the institute became a world-leading physics publisher. He oversaw the integration of publishing activities at a new centre in Bristol, and the establishment of the publishing division as a limited

company. In the years before his retirement, this publishing arm made an ever-greater contribution towards the promotion of other concerns.

Cohen initiated many collaborative ventures. He played a leading role in the establishment of the European Physical Society. He served for many years on its executive committee and was honorary treasurer from 1968 to 1973. But for his dedication, the society might well have foundered in its early years. He was also instrumental in setting up the Council of Science and Technology Institutes, a forum for the presidents and chief executives of scientific institutes and societies.

Until his health failed, Cohen was an active member, and one-time secretary of the Physical Society Club. The club, with limited membership, was established by Rutherford, W. L. and W. H. Bragg and others in 1921, and continues to this day the tradition of discussing recent developments in physics over and over after a fine dinner.

Louis Cohen was educated at Manchester Central High School, read physics at the University of Manchester and Imperial College, London, where he obtained his PhD. From 1953 to 1963 he was a research physicist with Simon-Carves and from 1963 to

1966 he worked as research manager for Pyrotenax in Newcastle upon Tyne. He was elected a member of the Institute of Physics in 1949 and a fellow in 1956; in 1963 he was elected to the fellowship of the Royal Society of Arts.

He retired as executive secretary of the Institute of Physics in 1990, by which time he was confined to a wheelchair. He bore multiple disabilities with a grace and cheerfulness that earned the respect and admiration of all who knew him. A mere ten days before he died many of his friends and former colleagues enjoyed his company and good humour at an Institute of Physics dinner.

Since retirement, he had relied heavily on the willing help of his son Jonathan, who transported him to various engagements. Jonathan's dedication to his father's needs ensured that Cohen was still able to participate in many activities, particularly those associated with physics.

Cohen maintained a lifelong connection with Manchester as a corresponding member of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, of which at one time he had been secretary. He had an abiding interest in classical music, opera and the theatre. He is survived by his wife, Eve, a son and two daughters.



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836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000</p> | MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS <p>SCHNEIDERMAN, Musical Instruments, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 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Bargains of the week — from flights to Shanghai via Vienna to a ten-day tour of Uzbekistan

HOLIDAYS

THE Italian cities of Venice, Assisi, Sorrento, Capri, Pompei, Rome and Florence are included in a Treasures of Italy tour from Archers Tours on August 24 for £435. Details: 0181-466 6745.

SEVEN nights at a three-star hotel a mile from the Taj Mahal, is available in October through Kuoni for £599, including return flights from Gatwick and bed and breakfast. Details: 01306-740500.

UNITED Vacations has three nights at the Holiday Inn in Washington for £299, including return flights from Heathrow. Holidays must be booked before September 30 and taken between November 1 and December 14 or between January 1 and March 20 next year. Details: 0181-313 0999.

SOMAK Holidays has two weeks half-board at a four-star hotel on Diani Beach, Mombasa, between August 24 and September 16 for £519. Details: 0181-423-3000.

THE cost of seven nights cruising on the Festival Cruise ship *Boero* has been cut from

£860 to £539 by The Cruise Line. Departures are on August 30 and September 6 and 13. The package includes return flights to Italy, all meals and entertainment and cruising to Venice, Dubrovnik and other ports. Details: 01273-835252.

QANTAS Holidays has five-night packages to Singapore between August 10 and September 30 for £509 compared with the brochure price of £619. Included are non-stop return flights from Heathrow, five nights at the New Park Hotel, taxes and transfers. Details: 0990 673464.

THERE are still vacancies on the Steppes East ten-day tour of Uzbekistan, leaving on September 26. Prices start at £1,560 a person and include flights, full-board accommodation, transportation and guided tours. Details: 01285-810267.

A WEEK in a Tyrolean pension from September 20 is available through Inghams for £172. Included are flights, transfers and bed and breakfast. Details: 0181-780 4448.

FERRIES

STENA Line has daytrip fares for Dover-Calais this month, from £25 for a car and five passengers. Foot passengers from £4. Details: 0990 707070.

HOVERSPEED has city-breaks to Bruges. Prices start at £49 a person for one night, based on four adults, and including Hoverport crossing. Details: 0990 240241.

TRAVEL agent AT Mays is offering a free five-day crossing with P&O Ferries on Dover-Calais when booking a standard return fare on the route. Prices start at £110. Bookings by August 31. Details: 0990 000888.

STENA Line has extended 50 per cent discounts for caravans and trailers until August 31 for its Stranraer-Belfast route. Peak season prices start at £130 for a five-day return. Details: 0990 707070.

HOVERSPEED has return fares to Paris and Amsterdam from £49 combining coach and ferry travel from London. Child prices are from £42. Details: 0990 240241.



Horse-riding among the geysers, glaciers and volcanoes of northern Iceland during the September wild horse and sheep round-up is offered by the tour operator In the Saddle. Four nights cost £470. Flights from Heathrow cost about £285 extra. Details: 01256 851665

FLIGHTS

REGULAR charter flights to Zurich in September and October cost from £79 return. The Swiss airline Edelweiss operates six times a week from Luton and also provides business-class seating from £119 return. Details: 0171-437 6968.

AUSTRIAN Airlines flights to Shanghai via Vienna cost £489 return for bookings made before August 15. Details: Lupus Travel 0171-306 3000.

EASYJET has reduced the starting price of its Luton to Amsterdam service from £35 to £29 while seats last. Details: 01832 700053.

VIRGIN Atlantic has a business-class spouse fare to Johannesburg of £1,207 for passengers paying the full price of £2,414. Depart before August 31. Details: 01293 747147.

CUT-PRICE airline America West has a useful £110 fare covering Los Angeles to Las Vegas to San Francisco, for those visiting the West coast. Details: 01483 440490.

HOTELS

RATES at the Metropolitan Hotel, Park Lane, have been reduced until the end of this month to £195 a room a night, including English breakfast for a city view and £235 for a park view. A two-night stay is required. Details: 0171-447 1047.

THE four-star Cavendish Hotel, Eastbourne, has a 20 per cent discount over the August Bank Holiday weekend. Price, available through Superbreaks Mini-Holidays, is £44 a person a night including breakfast and dinner. Details: 0161-238 5257.

THREE nights for the price of two is available this month at the four-star President WTC Hotel, Brussels. The offer, through Belgian Travel Service, costs £223 a person including flights. Details: 01992 456156.

FOLLOW the Jane Austen trail around Hampshire with the help of Andleys Wood Hotel, near Basingstoke. A two-night weekend break costs £148 a person and includes dinner, picnic lunch and maps with relevant his-

torical details around the Austen haunts. Details: 01256 817555.

GOLDENRAIL has a special weekend offer this month to see the musical *Jesus Christ Superstar* at the Lyceum and spend one night at the Grafton Hotel in central London. Cost is from £69 a person. Details: 0161-238 5206.

THE new Hyatt Regency Paris Madeleine Hotel in the centre of the city has a special opening offer until the end of the month of £950 single or £1,250 double. Details: 0345 581666.

THE newly opened Conservatory Bar and Restaurant at the Gloucester Hotel in London's South Kensington has a special offer this month of £5 a head for meals, including beverages. Details: 0171-331 6177.

ROOKERY Hall Hotel, at Worleston in Cheshire has a two-night break available this month. For £160 a person, including dinner, with a third night (£88 only) available free. Details: 01270 610016.

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Caravanners conquer Europe

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

THOUSANDS of adventurous British caravan owners are driving in convoy deep into Eastern Europe as the renaissance of mobile holiday camps gains pace.

The number of caravans on the roads of Britain and Europe is rising fast, after a decade of interest in caravans and trailers. They are now more sophisticated and luxurious, attracting high-spending tourists prepared to venture beyond the traditional British campsites and those of the near continent.

The Camping and Caravanning Club is now offering to escort caravanners on guided tours to Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, and demand has been so great that more tours are being arranged through the Club's Caravanning Travel Service.

Bob Stanton of the Camping and Caravanning Club, says: "At first, we offered one tour to Poland this year. But it was so over-subscribed that we had to add a second."

An inclusive package to central and southern Poland — including return ferry crossing, insurance, 14-day campsite accommodation, a guide, sightseeing and some evening meals — costs £766 for two people and their caravan. The company's new brochure has holidays in 112 camping and caravanning sites in 14 European countries.

Caravan holidays are also attracting specialist groups. So "focused tours" based on wine-tasting, bird-watching, fishing and nature study are also being arranged throughout much of Europe.

The strong pound and ready availability of ferry and Channel Tunnel crossings to mainland Europe are mainly responsible for the growing number of caravanners heading for the Continent. But it reflects a general improvement in the health of the industry.

Sales of touring caravans are rising for the first time in eight years, and membership of the Camping and Caravanning Club has risen by 30 per cent over the past five years. It now has 276,800 members, the highest number in its 95-year history.

Tony Hailey, chairman of the Tourer Marketing Bureau, says: "The tourist industry has turned the corner, and the popularity of caravanning is rising." Even so, the number of families owning touring caravans is still about 150,000 less than its peak of 20 years ago, when 650,000 were on the roads.

Though caravans are now far better equipped — many have central heating, flush lavatories and fully equipped kitchens — prices have stabilised or even dropped. A touring caravan now costs between £7,000 and £20,000,

and the biggest demand is from people aged between 45 and 50.

The industry has done much to improve facilities on campsites throughout both Britain and Europe, while pressing for access to more remote fields for those seeking a quiet holiday.

As a result, the network owned by the Camping and Caravanning Club has had its busiest year ever, with occupancy up by more than 5 per cent on the previous record year of 1995.

Cornish cope with crush

By JACK CROSSLEY

Last Friday the tourist information centre had 1,800 visitors seeking somewhere to sleep.

This sector of the holiday market has grown so much that some areas are designated Tourism Restraint Areas.

In 1992 John Williams was so angry at being stuck behind a caravan that he founded the Anti-Caravan Club, proposing that a dawn to dusk curfew be imposed on their movements.

"Yes, we probably do have more than most areas," said the man from the Devon tourist office, "but one caravan can slow you down as much as 20 caravans."

Bob Stanton, of the Camping and Caravanning Club, is doing his best to change the perception that his 280,000 members are the monsters of the motorways.

The club has been going since 1901 and has as its patron the Duke of Edinburgh — who, while seldom seen vanishing down along the Cornish Riviera, is often seen as a hazard driving a horse and carriage.

"We hold courses on safety, behaviour and manoeuvres," he said, "and West Country police forces have asked us for our guidance literature. This covers speed, weight, cornering, hill starts, braking, instabilities, tiredness, mirrors, tyres and tow bars."

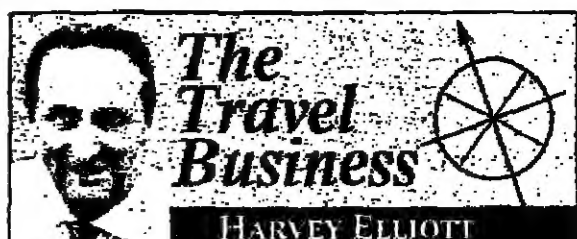
"We think we are getting our message through that caravans are safe. Accidents are extremely rare and the number has gone down every year for the past five years."

A Devon & Cornwall police spokesman confirmed that police will be continuing their policy of stopping caravans for random safety checks.

To find out more about caravan safety, contact the Camping and Caravanning Club on 01203 694995.



We're a great big convoy: caravan companies increasingly cater for specialist groups



Packages offer bespoke tours

Scenics have been mourning the "death" of the package holiday for as long as I can remember. Real tourists, they claim, are no longer prepared to be herded together, but are insisting on striking out on their own, making their own airline and hotel bookings and becoming free independent spirits.

To a limited extent — for those who can afford both the time and the money to find that special hideaway in Tuscany or idyllic hotel in Polynesia, and the airline to get them there — that may be true.

But for nine million Britons a year, a package is still the only way to go on holiday. Not only is the organisation of transport and accommodation done by someone else but the buying power of the tour operator brings costs tumbling down.

Try booking a hotel room as an individual — especially at peak times, for example — or finding a seat to almost any Mediterranean resort. The problems involved in doing it yourself are obvious.

The package holiday is still very much alive, but is changing dramatically. There will always be demand for the simple package — the cheap deal, chosen from a brochure or from Teletext, offering a flight and room-only accommodation in a bustling "Blackpool on the Med" resort.

But now there is a new kind of short-haul holiday-maker who wants a bargain price but has plenty of spare cash to spend freely on entertainment, drinks and food while away. Thomson is convinced that these holiday-makers also want to feel different from other package tourists and will be prepared to pay extra to do so. So the company is offering private taxis, rather than a coach, to

take them from the airport to the hotel, late check-out times at hotels, pre-booked seats on the aircraft, the use of the VIP lounge, or flowers and champagne on arrival — at a price.

Though the scheme has only just been launched, executives are convinced that within a few years up to half their clients will use at least one of these flexible options.

The recent development of all-inclusive resorts — from Spain to the West Indies — has enabled visitors to tell in advance exactly how much their holiday will cost.

Research by British Airways Holidays, which specialises in long-haul destinations, showed that only a third of clients took the exact holiday advertised in a brochure. More than 60 per cent wanted to change it, either by using different hotels or flights and generally wanting to make the package fit their requirements. Now the company is offering to "mix and match."

Saga, which is constantly forced to adapt to meet the demands of their older, well-travelled — and wealthy — clients, has introduced the "add-on" concept. A core holiday of any length can be extended by short visits to other destinations nearby, organised as the travellers wish.

Cruising is probably the ultimate package holiday. Both Thomson and Airtours, its arch rival, are developing their fleets of highly sophisticated ships at prices which are falling fast.

More than 60 per cent of the new generation of younger package holidaymakers spends a week at sea followed by a week in a hotel.

This, then, is the future of package holiday — flexible, all-inclusive, exotic and still a heck of a lot cheaper than you could do it yourself.

Riots fail to harm Kenya tours

By LINSEY McNEILL

BLOODY anti-government demonstrations and rising violence in Nairobi have failed to deter British holiday-makers from visiting Kenya, which is attracting more visitors from the UK than ever. Some tour operators say that bookings are up by as much as 40 per cent on last year, and Kenya's tourist office expects 11,000 additional visitors from the UK this year, up ten per cent on 1996.

Sammy Kibet, deputy director of the Kenya National Tourist Office for the UK and Ireland, says: "So far, charter flights and hotels have been fully booked."

To seek up destinations extra flights to Mombasa, on Kenya's east coast, Caledonian Airways has added a weekly charter from Manchester, until the end of October.

Tour operators received several calls from worried clients last month after the outbreak of violence in Nairobi, but there were no cancellations.

Declan Morton, product manager of Hayes & Jarvis, says: "The demonstrations have been confined to a small area in Nairobi, so holidaymakers are not in any danger. Most of our clients fly direct to Mombasa, anyway."

He adds that bookings for Kenya slowed down right after newspaper reports of the protests, but have since bounced back.

Jane Thornton, Kuoni's senior product manager, says: "We are having an excellent year. Safaris have been very successful, probably because Kenya has had positive publicity on wildlife programmes on TV."

Prices start at £469 for seven nights half-board at a coastal resort, and about £1,000 for a week-long safari — about two thirds the price of a similar holiday in Zimbabwe.

Encouraged by this year's strong

demand for Kenya, Kuoni has expanded its product range for 1998, when it will be offering the first seven-night all-inclusive safari, with all meals, drinks and game drives thrown in.

Shorter safaris are proving more popular for first-time visitors seeking a beach holiday with a taste of the bush thrown in. Several tour operators now offer one-day to three-night safaris as an extension to beach holidays, costing from £265. Inspirations has introduced a family safari holiday for next year that offers shorter game drives and more free time between excursions to suit young children.

Cornwall has doubled its number of attractive properties in its Distant Dreams brochure for the coming winter and next year. It has added the African Dream Village and Tropical Village in Malindi and the Silver Beach Hotel on Bamburi Beach, both on the coast.

Kenya may lose business from couples planning to marry abroad, however, since the Government's decision to increase wedding administration fees by £100 to £150. Kuoni, one of the biggest tour operators organising weddings in Kenya, says it had been given just 24 hours' notice of the rise.

"This will kill weddings in Kenya," Ms Thornton says. "It was our third or fourth most popular destination for couples getting married, but now the cost is too high."

The Federation of Tour Operators (FTO), which represents the UK's major travel companies, wrote last month to the Kenya National Tourist Office for clarification of legal fees, but it is still awaiting a reply.

Alan Flook, the FTO's secretary-general, says: "If Kenya wants to benefit from this market, it cannot raise fees at such short notice."



Masai: the ancient traditions of Kenya are still drawing the tourists

'Chiantishire' now offers value for all

By IAN FLETCHER

THIS IS the second year that Tony Blair and his family have headed for "Chiantishire", and the surrounding hills are filled with European leaders and some of Britain's wealthiest and most influential families.

But tourist operators and officials are eager to emphasise that Tuscany, despite its upmarket image, offers a wide range of holidays.

The pound's strength is also playing a part in ensuring that holidaymakers enjoy a better deal when it comes to ordering from the menu and wine list in restaurants.

Yet even in peak season, tourism has not spelt the friendly welcome that persuades visitors to return again and again to the historic towns and cities of this region. A meal, or even a snack in the



San Gimignano: views from the town are glorious

breath-taking centre of a beautiful main square can, however, come at a premium. So the cost-conscious soon learn to follow the locals to the best and cheapest meals and local wines in side-street restaurants.

The affordable live means that prices are little different from those of the UK; a three-course meal for two with wine costs about £25, a pint of beer £2.20 and a multi-flavoured ice cream less than a pound.

If the dramatic architecture and narrow cobbled streets of towns such as Siena and San Gimignano should pall, some of Italy's most glorious countryside is on the doorstep. A wildlife area and a Pinocchio park are within easy reach of the town, so youngsters will find plenty to occupy them. There are also countless medieval towns and ancient vil-

Big perks for small firms

By CATHERINE CHETWIND

A SERVICE aimed at small businesses has been launched by business travel agent Hogg Robinson BTI. Business Travel Direct allows small, independent companies to share some of the advantages enjoyed by large corporations, such as greater purchasing power.

Paul Reeve, divisional manager of Hogg Robinson, says: "Of the five million small companies registered in the UK, around one million have staff who travel regularly. These represent 20 per cent of the total business travel market, which is worth some £6 million in airline tickets alone."

Hogg Robinson started to analyse the small companies market around 15 months ago and discovered that most of them tended to buy their tickets from high street leisure shops.

"We were not making it easy for them," said Mr Reeve. "We imposed credit vetting, minimum turnover requirements and do not even have a separate listing in Yellow Pages."

Business Travel Direct provides access to the discounted air fares and hotel rates enjoyed by larger clients such as

the BBC, Coopers & Lybrand and Merrill Lynch.

"In addition to financial advantages, the high street travel agent is not in a position to provide our back-up services, such as passport and visa procurements, foreign exchange and 24-hour emergency assistance 365 days a year," said Mr Reeve.

Other benefits include chauffeur parking at Heathrow, Gatwick and Manchester airports; mobile phone rentals; international calling cards and home delivery.

Tony Hughes, chairman of the Guild of Business Travel Agents, supports the move. "It is always in a client's best interest to deal with a specialist," he said. "And a company should not be put off because it is small. There is always a business travel agent to deal with their business."

Although only 43 agents are registered with the GBTA, 80 per cent of business travel from the UK is booked through its members.

Hogg Robinson is also teaming up with banks, providing services to smaller companies with corporate cards through a special number. Business Travel Direct can be reached on 0990 673048.

Elvis fans flock to Memphis

By DAVID CHURCHILL

RECORD numbers of British Elvis fans are heading for Memphis for next week's special 20th anniversary celebrations to commemorate his death.

Arena Travel of Felixstowe, travel agent of the UK's official Elvis Presley Fan Club since before the star died, is sending 1,200 British fans — the largest group ever — to Tennessee's week-long celebrations, which culminate in a candlelit vigil on August 15, when Elvis died.

British tour operators, including Kuoni Travel and Virgin Holidays report increased demand because of "Elvis Week".

Elvis fans holidaying in Orlando have been able to combine their vacation with a trip to Memphis next week. TicketShop USA, which specialises in American holidays, has organised a two-night trip from Orlando to Memphis at £229 a head.

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- Roger Berthoud returns to South Korea after 40 years
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